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Thematic Development in the Novels
of
Lawrence Durrell
1935 - 1960

by



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A THESIS

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To many luck may give for merit
More profitable teachers. To the heart
A critic and a nymph;
And an unflinching doctor to the spirit.

-- "Cities, Plains and People"

ABSTRACT

This thesis proposes that there is an obvious and consistent philosophy developed in the work of Lawrence Durrell, British novelist, poet and playwright. Due to the size and diversity of his canon, this discussion of thematic development concentrates solely on the novels which Durrell published in the years 1935 - 1960.

As a group, Chapters One through Three argue that Pied Piper of Lovers (1935), Panic Spring (1937) and The Black Book (1938) form a loosely-knit and heretofore unacknowledged trilogy. Individually, they explore, in relation to specific novels, three major themes, the early development of which is rounded out in The Black Book. Those themes are: the rejection of linear time in favour of volumetric time; the growth in definition and application of Durrell's 'heraldic universe'; and the development and advocacy of an essentially physitheistic view of the relationship of man with the natural world.

Chapter Four deals with Cefalû (1947), which was later retitled The Dark Labyrinth. The themes which were established as being central to the early trilogy are here viewed as they are presented in the 'extended morality' which Durrell claimed he had written in this,

his fourth novel. Concentration in this chapter is on 'the heraldic universe', which is now seen to be defined in terms of the relationship with nature advocated in the earlier novels. Finally, Chapter Four suggests that Cefalû[^] is a capsule statement of the early themes which allowed Durrell to consolidate his views in order that he might move on to a further and redirected exploration of them.

Chapter Five discusses the changes in the aforementioned themes as they appear in The Alexandria Quartet (1956 - 1960). The concept of volumetric time has been developed into what Durrell calls a 'space-time soup-mix', an adaptation of the principles of Relativity and Indeterminacy which is the structuring principle of the tetralogy. The first part of the chapter explores a new theory of narrative siting which is one implication of that structure. In the second part, the relationship of man with the natural world is seen as particularised in Groddeck's theory of the feminine principle as it is embodied in the character of Justine. 'The heraldic universe' is now seen to be particularly relevant to the development of the artist, and part three discusses the changes in Darley, who narrates three of the four volumes of the Quartet. Finally, Chapter Five suggests

that The Alexandria Quartet is the logical conclusion to the development of the three themes which were first explored in Pied Piper of Lovers.

Chapter Six does not pretend to be an analysis of Tunc-Nunquam (1968 - 1970). Durrell's latest novel begins the exploration of a new theme, culture, although it owes a great deal to the thematic considerations of the earlier novels. Thus this brief "Afterward" merely points out the ways in which those earlier themes have been adapted to new considerations.

"PREFACE"

Lawrence Durrell is best known for his Alexandria Quartet, the second volume of which he prefaced with the remark,

The central topic of the book is an investigation of modern love.¹

It may well be, as it is liberally sprinkled with almost every conceivable sexual and non-sexual relationship which might be categorized under the general rubric, 'love'. This does not, however, preclude the possibility of an underlying philosophic viewpoint which the reader in search of 'modern love' might overlook and which, in fact, might qualify the term 'love' out of all recognition. It is the purpose of this thesis to show that such a viewpoint does exist, and that it is a recurrent element in the Durrell canon as it now stands.

Reviewing Durrell's most recent novel, Nunquam, Anthony Burgess observes that 'Durrell is not primarily a thinker'.² If we wish to avoid the "paean-disguised-as-criticism" trap into which Weigel falls in his volume on Durrell,³ we must admit that Burgess is essentially correct. Lawrence Durrell is not primarily 'a thinker' in the line, say, of Wyndham Lewis. However, he is also not, like Robert Ardrey,⁴ a "populariser" of the works of others. His role as a writer falls between the two: he is an "illustrator", and his novels, plays and poems since 1935 have all to some degree illustrated a world-view or philosophy to which he subscribes but the terms of which

he has borrowed from others.

In a televised interview for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Durrell described his own creative process as follows.

I am a serious writer, and I have serious ideas, serious notions. And I try to put them into execution. But I feel rather pushed to the wall at the moment, because I invent! Now I don't mean to say that if, walking down the street in Sommières, the boulangier has a green eye or a blue eye or a yellow eye, that I won't make a note of that in my notebook. And I may transfer that to an ambassador. A green eye would be a marvellous help to an ambassador, you see. The chic of a green eye. Imagine him in Vienna, with a green eye; a totally green eye, and the other one blue. The women would go mad about him! So I might get it off some boulangier here, and transfer it, and use it. But that's not copying the character at all. I'm a spare parts man.⁵

The philosophical 'spare parts' which Durrell has borrowed have come from such diverse writers as Lao Tzu, Wyndham Lewis and Remy de Gourmont.

Commenting on the two-volume Aut Tunc Aut Nunquam, Burgess asks,

What does it all add up to? Perhaps the tunc and the nunquam can be teased into representing the 1 (clock-hand of action) and 0 (creative passivity) of the Kabbala, male and female, happy and blessed, from which all else springs. We are free to love, and love is the only source of creation. We can never be wholly enslaved by the great forces that sneer at free will and think they can do better than Nature. It is a comforting conclusion to reach, but we have to come a long way to reach it.⁶

Mr. Burgess has not really come a long way through Tunc and Nunquam. He has merely come through the latest (and in his opinion least successful) of the many attempts Lawrence Durrell has made to illustrate his philosophy in his writing. Had Mr. Burgess come through from the beginning, from Pied Piper of Lovers, his conclusions in this review article would not have been, and might not have been intended to seem, as astounding as they appear. It is in the 'spare parts' which Durrell has used from Pied Piper of Lovers (1935) through Nunquam (1970) that the key to his philosophy lies. De Gourmont, Freud, Jung, Groddeck, Lewis; Quietism, the Caballa, the 'Pelmanism' of his unpublished short story, "The Will-power Man": these are the 'spare parts' which comprise Durrell's philosophy, and they are present in varying intensity and degree throughout the whole of his literary output to date.

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CHAPTER ONE

"THE WANDERER ON THE BEACH"

In a "Contributors" note to one of the issues of The Booster, the organ of 'the American Country Club of France' which he helped edit in the late 1930s, Lawrence Durrell is said to be 'now at work on The Book of the Dead'.¹ At this point, Pied Piper of Lovers (1935) and Panic Spring (1937) had both appeared, and the book to which the note refers is seemingly The Black Book (1938). But the same note indicates that Durrell is the author of The Black Book, and an excerpt from that novel actually appeared in the following issue of The Booster.² A study of these first three novels, however, shows that they form a loosely-knit trilogy, an important point which the critics have thus far overlooked entirely. Further, they might be said to roughly fit the description of a 'book of the dead' which W. Y. Evans-Wentz gives in his "Preface" to the second edition of The Tibetan Book of The Dead. 'The Egyptian Book of the Dead, correctly entitled,' he says, 'is

The Coming Forth from Day, with reference to the sacred Egyptian art of the coming forth from this life into another life, or, in the language of Pharaonic Egypt, the Per em hru. Similarly, The Tibetan Book of the Dead, in the original Tibetan, is the Bardo Thödol, meaning 'Liberation by Hearing on the After-Death Plane', and implying a yogic method of coming forth into Nirvanic Liberation, beyond the Cycle of Birth and Death. Each of these two books concerning death thus inculcates, by its own peculiar method, an Art of Dying and Coming Forth into a New Life³

A 'book of the dead', then, is a guide to the "other world" for the living, the dying and the dead. Seen in Durrell's own terms, and from the standpoint of his own peculiar definition of 'the English Death',⁴ this early trilogy is indeed a 'book of the dead'.

In an early letter to Henry Miller, Durrell gave a biographical sketch which is in essence a summary of the plot of Pied Piper of Lovers.

My birth and upbringing? I was born in India. Went to school there -- under the Himalayas. The most wonderful memories, a brief dream of Tibet until I was eleven. Then that mean, shabby little island up there [England] wrung my guts out of me and tried to destroy anything singular and unique in me.⁵

As a first novel, Pied Piper has many of the autobiographical "search-for-self" characteristics of other novels of its type.

As the "Prologue" to the novel makes clear, the protagonist of the novel, Walsh Clifton, is the product of the marriage of a British engineer and a Burmese woman. Born 'in those first days of the monsoon',⁶ he is subjected to the pathetic fallacy by his creator throughout the book. His mother having died in childbirth, Clifton is raised by his father. Durrell's attribution of parts of his own story to that of a fictional half-caste boy may have come from an unspoken desire to associate himself

more with the Eastern than the Western tradition. Certainly the closing passage of the "Prologue" is an indication of his own feelings about the relationship between the "pukkah" Britishers and their colonial subjects.

. . . on one side of the coffin
[Krisnati, the carpenter,] had not
planed the wood smooth, had not
obliterated the red, stamped capital
letters that herded unsteadily
together and displayed their meaning
for all to see. Perhaps he had
divined the need for an epitaph,
some parting tribute to hollow flesh
now empty of life-force: perhaps,
in his fuddled old mind, he
remembered the inscribed tombstones
of the oppressors of his race,
scattered about plots of weed-grown
land in his own country. Who can
say?

The words were:

'WITH GREAT CARE'
'THE KULU APPLE'
(The white man's delight).⁷

After the death and burial of Clifton's mother, Durrell omits six years of the boy's life and begins Book I, Chapter I with the Cliftons, father and son, in the hill country of India, where the father is building another railroad. With this easy link between the life of his fictional character and his own birthplace, Julundur, the rest of Durrell's novel becomes pure autobiography.

"Cities, Plains and People", the title poem of Durrell's second published volume of verse (1946), is the closest and most obvious parallel with the early trilogy. In the opening lines of that poem, he describes

how he

Saw the Himalayas like lambs there
 Stir their huge joints and lay
 Against his innocent thigh a stony thigh.⁸

Walsh Clifton's intimate relationship with the natural world around him, and in particular his association of deity with that world, arises early in the novel. Wishing to punish his ayah, the boy

retired to the bottom of the garden,
 and dug a small hole in the ground
 with his rusty penknife. This was
 part of the mysterious formula which
 was a prelude to the anathema he was
 about to pronounce⁹ [,]

and a private ritual which he evolves entirely on his own. The practice of prayer, however, is short-lived. Soon Walsh discovers another, more direct means of gaining strength and assistance, one which is reminiscent of the pantheistic poems of Wordsworth. Punished for any reason, the boy would leave the house and climb 'a great eucalyptus tree'.

At such times he seemed to draw a reserve of strength from the rustling life of the tree. In his imagination he would feel the ponderous drumming of life in its arteries, a drumming like the magnified beat of his own heart; the creak of the wind in the branches was a low ecstatic sound of mother-comfort, lulling, irresistible, that purged his mind of all shame and bitterness and dishonour.¹⁰

The boy's dependence on the eucalyptus tree for emotional sustenance is a kind of symbiosis not unknown in English

literature, and is akin to the elements of the pathetic fallacy with which he is associated very early in the novel.

Walsh's introduction to Father Calhoun, S. J., and a glimpse of the 'holy place' in the nave of the church, presents the boy with what appears to be only a formalization of his ceremony in the garden. The end of Chapter I, however, reaffirms Walsh's original view. The highly formal worship of which he has seen a small part is in some way not as satisfactory as his own communion with nature manifest in his relationship with the tree.

That night during dinner Walsh said:
 "Y'know, I feel rather sorry for the
 Fathers at the monastery," but to all
 Clifton's questioning he could give
 no answer. He could not tell why:
 indeed, he did not know.¹¹

Chapter II of Pied Piper is of importance to the development of Clifton, for it presents the father as undergoing a struggle in his relationship with himself vis à vis the boy. Very much akin in some ways to Kipling's Mowgli, Walsh Clifton has begun to acquire what is almost a Buddhist respect for life -- but a respect not based at this point on the notion of metempsychosis. His father, too, it is made quite clear, is concerned with certain 'implacable forces' with which he must come to grips. Having given the boy a verbal thrashing for cutting pictures out of the Times of India, and having later tried

unsuccessfully to reconcile himself to his son,

he stood for a long time before the window of his room, slowly revolving the puzzled problems of relationship. Like most men of his type he could not trace or formulate them, but was conscious of them as a dark and troubled accompaniment to the dusty ballad of existence.¹²

Conscious, too, of his ultimate inability to change, even in the face of the changes in his son, John Clifton reverts to his 'bottomless fund of egotistic optimism'.

The implacable forces could be placated, not by himself, nor by the abruption of conscious action, but by that unflinching acquiescence in himself, which would make room for change.

There was no exulting determination in himself to destroy or bend these forces to his will.

Simply, one must believe.¹³

Thus it is that both the father and the son, each unknown to the other, have become involved in the forces of nature as they are defined by, among others, Buddhism and Taoism. The existence of an 'implacable force' which is seemingly outside man, but of which man is in fact a part, is what is affirmed here.

Can man, in fact, exist outside the universe; that is, in contravention of the laws which govern every other living creature? T. H. Huxley, in his Romanes lecture at

Oxford in May, 1893, made certain statements on this subject which are roughly paralleled in the thoughts of Walsh Clifton after he has been informed that he is to attend the Jesuit school. 'Let us understand, once and for all,' said Huxley,

that the ethical progress of society depends, not on imitating the cosmic process, still less in running away from it, but in combating it The history of civilization details steps by which men have succeeded in building up an artificial world within the cosmos.¹⁴

As far as the schooling demanded by society, Walsh Clifton

knew that it was only part of his time that would be taken up in these new and uninteresting pursuits; there would still be time enough to catch butterflies, and go for walks; time enough to play his games. Yet the thought oppressed him; he knew, with that intuitive conviction of boyhood, that this was but the beginning. Perhaps, even now, if he did not take this threat seriously, did not allow himself to accept the intrusion, the danger would pass, leaving him untouched; yet the hope was built on such slender things: things inexpressible since they were not even defined to himself¹⁵

Here the 'jungli' which the boy has become¹⁶ begins to descend what Durrell later called 'the long sad river of [his] growth:/ The tide-bound, tepid, causeless / Continuum of terrors in the spirit'.¹⁷

The boy's introduction to death is a relatively

simple one, a result of his exploring the native burial ground on Victoria Hill. One day, coming across the remains of a funeral pyre out of which a white ankle-bone is jutting, he comes finally face to face with death in its most concrete, defined terms.

For a few weeks after that he had been worried by all manner of morbid speculations and doubts; mortality, and the frailty of mortality, had weighed very heavily upon him. Then the phase had passed, leaving him nothing but that comforting preoccupation with nearer things.¹⁸

His introduction to Mr. Sowerby, however, reintroduces the theme and brings it closer to the boy: death now becomes one of the 'nearer things' for Walsh Clifton.

The boy meets Sowerby quite by accident one day while chasing a butterfly.¹⁹ Having been admonished for trespassing, Walsh is invited in to have tea and to see the old man's 'collection'. Up on the first floor of the house, Sowerby has a room lined 'with tier upon tier of cases in which, neatly mounted on cork, were preserved the taut beautiful bodies of a great number of butterflies'.²⁰ Walsh experiences an 'unaccountable' feeling of shame, seeing Sowerby standing listlessly among what should be his greatest pride, but he cannot place the feeling or its cause. It was not merely the idea of Sowerby gutting a beetle,

but something more urgently disturbing. The preoccupation of those slender, womanish hands in the methodical taking of life, and the preservation of the body. Something that was as high and vital as the sight of that clean white ankle-bone projecting from the ashes of a pyre on Victoria Hill. His mind wriggled with disaster.

"You . . . you don't keep glass over them," he asked nervously to the unheeding man. "I thought"

"It's a fancy of mine," said Mr. Sowerby "It's a fancy of mine," he continued, "that some day they'll come to life . . . all . . . somehow . . . perhaps the lightning will galvanize them . . . to life," he seemed again to lose himself in the mazes of distasteful thought. "Escape . . . all of them . . ." his voice was a whisper.

[For Walsh], the thought was a nightmare of liberation.²¹

The surrealist image which flashes through the boy's mind, an image which is extended shortly after into a more concrete one,²² is of beetles and butterflies and all manner of "bugs" coming to life in the midst of an electrical storm -- the reverse, in a way, of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, in which the unnatural is made from the natural, and a theme which runs through Durrell's work into the present volume, Nunquam (1970).

The respect for life which is gained through the vicarious experience of death, the crisis which the boy had accidentally encountered on Victoria Hill but which had meant little to him after a short time, is now made clearer. The captured butterfly on which he had expended so much

energy, and which Mr. Sowerby had so carefully killed for him, Walsh Clifton buries as soon as he leaves Sowerby's house. The burial itself is reminiscent of the boy's earlier form of prayer,²³ and a solid link is made between the boy and the natural world of life and death. On the way home, in fact, Walsh goes out of his way to avoid a native funeral procession, his fear lying, not in death itself, but in passing the cortege.

It is not death that the boy fears, but the human procedures applied to the dead: 'If you got ill and died, you were either buried or burnt'.²⁴ Unwittingly, perhaps, Walsh Clifton has begun to identify himself with the ecological processes of nature in a manner which excludes consideration of those processes which have been forced upon nature by man from without. For the boy, there is no fear in death, just as there is no fear in life: there is fear only in those aspects of both which are man-made -- the funeral procession and the cremation or interment which always followed, and the societal pressures for the schooling of the young, rather than allowing them to be 'jungli'. Of the three basic facets of the natural world -- procreation, life and death --, only the sexual aspect has not been a question to the boy.

The coming of his paternal aunt, Brenda, a Boadicean figure among the native porters,²⁵ is linked, albeit tenuously, with two new aspects of life for Walsh: laughter,

and the sexual nature of man and his animal peers. In the light of his later comments on 'the English Death', it would be stretching a point to say that Durrell intended to embody Britannia in Aunt Brenda -- yet she is most certainly representative of 'Belitee' for the natives, and is the means by which Clifton is ultimately translated to 'the prudish cliffs and the sad green home / Of Pudding Island o'er the Victorian foam'²⁶ at the beginning of Book II.

The apocalypse of laughter, and its necessity in the reconciliation of man with the natural order, is first expressed in Pied Piper and has more recently been expressed by Durrell in a televised interview. In the latter, discussing the mechanism of personal release into the natural order, Durrell says,

The trouble is, we haven't an effective mechanism in metaphysical and religious terms, you see. The whole of the beastly, revolting European pattern, which I loathe: Christianity. It has good things in it, but it doesn't add up to anything. It's not a sufficient springboard for this thing. It used to be. You get isolated saints who can bring water. But the populace, in general, doesn't understand the principles. And the principle's terribly simple. The principle is laughter! It's laughter! It's very macabre, to me. It's enormously macabre! But the principle is laughter. If you go up laughing, and you scream, the god will bring water! It'll be proved soon by the Americans, and we'll get artificial laughers. You know, on a big salary, who laugh all day long in order

to bring rain. It's like the savages. But we're back like the savages!²⁷

This 'metaphysical and religious' mechanism, this 'macabre' but 'effective' springboard, is central to Durrell's thought, so much so that it appears throughout the trilogy we are now discussing and in Nunquam (1970). More will be said about it later. It will be sufficient to quote the relevant passage from Pied Piper to illustrate its earliest use.

Laughter! The word held the answer to the truth he was about to discover.

He had never really laughed before. Never in the same whole-hearted way. Never like that.

As he clambered into bed [Walsh] whispered: "I laughed . . . awfully . . . I laughed . . . I laughed . . ." as though the thought was apocalypse.²⁸

The boy's introduction to the mysteries of sex comes about through a chance meeting with a small native boy at a ruined shrine. It is gradually made clear to the native boy exactly who Walsh is.

"Cleefthun sahib," said the boy musingly, "you are his son, he who is sannyassi?" [explained in the text as 'continent']

Walsh drew a deep breath and wrinkled up his eyes: "Hai Mai!" he said with emphasis, "what mysteries are these?"

"Mysteries? Does the whole world know of mysteries?"

.

Without haste or emotion the boy explained the mysteries of procreation. He droned on, illustrating (entirely without shame) those parts of his story that seemed to require illustration. Walsh listened with growing amazement, gently biting the tip of his tongue.

.

"Indeed, these are strange things," said Walsh, whistling softly through his teeth. "I see with new eyes many things. Animals you say also behave in this way? Indeed, these are strange tales."

"No tales," said the boy, "but truth."²⁹

The 'whole world' which knows of the 'mysteries' of which the native boy speaks may well be seen as a reference to the world of man. But considering that Durrell had read Remy de Gourmont's The Natural Philosophy of Love when he wrote Pied Piper, and actually associates Walsh Clifton with De Gourmont later in the novel,³⁰ it is more likely that 'the whole world' encompasses the whole of the natural world of which Walsh has become so obvious a part. It is left to Aunt Brenda to corroborate the native boy's 'truth', but also to impose morality thereon. Her very words are ironical when she suggests that Walsh not speak of it with his father because 'it's so . . . so . . . natural that we don't speak about it together, that's all'.³¹ In his volume, De Gourmont is concerned with pointing out the sameness of men and animals in their slavery to the will to survive and

propagate the species. At the end of his chapter on "The Aim of Life", he says,

There is not in the will to live the faintest trace of our poor little human morality. If one wishes an unique sole morality, that is to say an universal commandment, which all species may listen to, which they can follow in spirit and in letter, if one wishes in short to know the "aim of life" and the duty of the living, it is necessary, evidently, to find a formula which will totalize all the contradictions, break them and fuse them into a sole affirmation. There is but one, we may repeat it, without fear, and without allowing any objection: the aim of life is life's continuation.³²

By the end of Book I, Chapter V, and before his admission to the Jesuit school for his first taste of society learning, Walsh Clifton has come to know life in its most elemental and natural form; he has come to know religion in its natural and its man-made forms, and has rejected the latter;³³ and he has come to know death and, through it, has accepted the life of the natural order. The latter portion of Book I is concerned with his schooling under Father Calhoun, and with the advent of Grand-mamma, a grossly overweight proselytizing Puritan with a handful of theological tracts and the uncommon motto, 'It takes ten whole years for the worms to eat through the coffin'.³⁴ The dream of Chapter VIII is a mélange of all that has gone before in Book I: the lamas from Tibet; Mr. Sowerby and his dream of the galvanizing into life of

his entire collection of insects; Grandmamma's never-ceasing motto; the unwanted knowledge that he is soon to go 'home' to England with Brenda; Mr. Abraham, come in his 'great shining Heavenly Airplane' to see Grandmamma,³⁵ and an unknown memory with which Durrell ties the first book of his novel to its "Prologue":

And [Abraham's] airplane swerved away
across the valley towards Sikkim. As
it passed over the end of the garden
something large fell out of it into
a flower bed. It was a clean, white
coffin, on the side of which was
written, in unsteady red capitals:

WITH GREAT CARE
THE KULU APPLE
(The white man's delight).³⁶

Book II of Pied Piper of Lovers is apposed to Book I in that it is composed almost entirely of the experiences of Walsh Clifton in the man-made system of an English public school. In a way, it is the direct antithesis of Thomas Hughes's Tom Brown's School Days, although the school Clifton attends is certainly patterned on Arnold's Rugby as Hughes portrays it. The style also undergoes a change from the straight narrative device of Book I to one in which the author very often interpolates his own comments. A quotation from early in Book II will serve to illustrate both the change in style and the general tone which prevails throughout.

It is very nearly impossible to
assess the blame, to attribute it to
one person or another; indeed it is
doubtful whether such a thing as

blame exists in these matters, whatever the jealous fiction of the novelist, whatever the tirades, the denunciations. Is it possible to refrain from coercing a child? Then why not mass-coercion? Why not a type? In an irrational world, dependent mostly on standards which do not exist, it seems logical that we spend our lives upholding, justifying them: humanity must have something to do: must prime itself with the wine of these happy illusions as a condemned man about to mount the scaffold, since its own peering, inquisitive, spectacled mind is for ever forced to pry among mysteries, seeking it knows not what, finding a meagre handful of nothing, and being forever constrained to remember the awful undiscovered space beyond itself. And humanity's children? They, too, wander on the empty beach, turning over the stones that are not too heavy for them to lift, looking eagerly underneath. They too, are little, fearful, and very much alone. ³⁷

If nothing more could be said here about Book II of the novel, the foregoing would serve as the essence of the material which Durrell illustrates through the life of Walsh Clifton at school in England. But a great deal more must be said, if we are to realize the sources of the thinking in Panic Spring and The Black Book, and the bases upon which the latter two novels of the trilogy are founded.

Durrell's procedure in Book II is primarily that of statement and illustration. Thus the foregoing statement is illustrated by the unsuccessful attempts which Clifton

makes to be "English" and a part of the "English" system of things.³⁸ In its most specific sense, culture is always a product of time, but Durrell makes it quite clear that Walsh Clifton is a child of space, and consequently of a different breed from the boys who attend school with him.³⁹ His considerations are consequently spatial, and even Aunt Brenda finds it difficult to adjust to 'Belitee'.⁴⁰ One of the interpolated remarks which Durrell makes, in Chapter II, deals with Walsh Clifton's animal-like qualities, qualities which De Gourmont would have praised, and the fact that they are threatened by the imposition of the "English" cultural trappings on the boy.

One is not treated as a rational creature at fourteen. One does not, as a generation of sexless fathers and high-school teachers have repeatedly reminded us, know one's own wants. I have said that he was a child of space, and that is as true an approximation of his qualities as words can give; lustiness, an aptitude for sheer sensual appreciation, a secret self-immolating zest for raw life -- all of these were threatened.

Of course he did not realize. All the greater tragedies of life happen within us -- in our unconscious minds. He could not be expected to realize. Yet, I suppose some queer streak in him did make him resist: some cell in him must have been warned against the new enemy.⁴¹

An imposed system of living is new to the boy, as against the natural system with which he had been familiar in India. A great part of that new system is the joining

of clubs at school and the attendance at compulsory church services. Both come together, in Book II, in the attitude toward sexual relations. The homosexuality, and specifically the practise of sodomy and onanism, which had grown rampant in the public schools, and against which there had been a great public outcry in the press,⁴² is encountered by Walsh Clifton soon after he becomes a student. The boy is neither approving nor condemning of such practices:

"It was all purely and simply a sort of experimental attitude -- like tasting a new drink. I didn't like it, that's all".⁴³ The head master's private lecture to him on 'the mysteries of life',⁴⁴ (or what the head himself referred to as his 'lecture on smut'), ending in a short prayer, leaves the boy wondering whether he and the head 'were both meaning the same thing, or indeed whether the little native boy had been lying to him'.⁴⁵ This union of the sexual instinct and the religious institution is made laughable when the head asks that the Christian God "Open [Walsh's] eyes . . . and let the truth of life be revealed to him",⁴⁶ when the 'truth of life' had been revealed to him by the native boy some years before. Here Durrell is following De Gourmont on "The Mechanism of Love" almost exactly, for the latter points out that

one may however affirm . . . that animals are not ignorant either of sodomy or of onanism and that they cede to them by necessity, in the absence of females.

. . . .

There is here an entire science [sexual ethnography] which has been corrupted by Christian prudery. An order was issued long ago and is still obeyed; one has concealed all that unites, sexually, man and animal, everything that proves the unity of origin for all that lives and feels.

.

It is very difficult, especially when dealing with man, to distinguish between normal and abnormal. What is the normal; what the natural? Nature ignores this adjective, and one has dragged out of her bosom many illusions, perhaps in irony, perhaps in ignorance.⁴⁷

The sense of lack of freedom which Walsh Clifton feels, and which the author describes Brenda as also feeling,⁴⁸ is a result of the restrictions placed upon the individual in England being set against the remembered freedoms of life in India. The animal nature of the boy, and in part of his aunt, has been almost caged by England and its institutions: on their arrival, 'they lived very nervously for a few days, as wild creatures accustoming themselves to a new environment'.⁴⁹ These are the same restrictions which Christian Marlowe escapes in Panic Spring (1937) and to which Durrell refers as 'the English Death' in The Black Book (1938).

The apocalyptic and cathartic nature of laughter, and the importance of following the spatial rather than the temporal mode of living, are pointed up in Walsh's encounter with Ruth and her brother, Gordon, during a

summer vacation at Hangar. Ruth is immediately associated with the spatial mode,⁵⁰ and the naturalness of her swimming naked with a boy whom she has just met forms an immediate bond between the two, a bond founded only in small part on the sexual aspect of their relationship.⁵¹ Although he loses her again almost immediately, Walsh is left with an heraldic motto, 'No Shame', the cryptic message of which is explained by Gordon.

"On one of the shields that Ruth painted there was a motto . . . No Shame She was very proud of it and said it should be our [hers and Gordon's] motto, since we were savage people and much nearer to the earth than most. She was full of a theory about direct sensory impacts, hampered as little as possible by current shibboleths . . . a theory neither of us really bothered to work out . . . subordination to instinct."⁵²

Here, again, Durrell is using De Gourmont, this time on "Instinct" and the "Tyranny of the Nervous System". Gordon's remarks to Walsh on the latter's similarity to him and Ruth, and the statement, '"They haven't got you yet"',⁵³ provide an interesting comment in themselves on the institutionalized kind of life to which Walsh has been exposed, and of which he has tried very earnestly to become a part, albeit with reservations.⁵⁴ De Gourmont's final statement in his chapter on "Instinct" is noteworthy in this context: 'Collective civilization

has diminished the individual genius'.⁵⁵ Further, his closing remarks on the "Tyranny of the Nervous System" are illustrative of Walsh's reaction to Ruth's heraldic message to him. 'Every organized animal,' says De Gourmont, 'has a master: its nervous system

Animals bear this tyranny better than man. Their master asks fewer things. Often it only asks one: to create a being in its exact likeness. The animal is sane, that is to say, ruled; man is mad, that is to say, out of rule: he has so many orders to execute at once, that he scarcely does any one well. In civilized countries he can hardly reproduce himself and the species is in danger.⁵⁶

Here, for the first time in the novel, Clifton can rationalize the feeling of uneasiness he has had since his first introduction to Father Calhoun⁵⁷ and more strongly since his arrival in England. The conflict between the spatial and the temporal, the natural and the societal, is summed up in Gordon's explanation of Ruth's motto. That motto, in fact, is the quiddity of Walsh's own "pre-England" self and, at the same time, contains the denial of Cartesian dualism which Durrell made clear in a later poem.⁵⁸ Descartes' remarks on the ascendance of the mind over the body⁵⁹ are here reversed in Walsh's reaction to the motto:

And behind the message, he seemed to discover to himself something of the majesty of living, the

greatness of the body. He seemed to guess that these forces were divided into conflict: mind and body, and that the triumph of the body was somehow desired, as a victory over a crawling and imperfect mind.⁶⁰

The fact that he has encountered his own 'crawling and imperfect mind', and prefers his body as a more viable vehicle for personal exploration, does not preclude Walsh's eclectic reading of everything from murder mysteries to Freudian psychology, most of which is provided by Binhook, his English teacher. His sharing a study with Turnbull, who is also a 'swot',⁶¹ leads to a kind of intellectual companionship which Walsh has never known, and of which he has had no need until his meeting with Ruth and Gordon.⁶² In fact,

in the case of Study C, it was Walsh who made all the discoveries, searched the new book lists, and developed the deplorable habit of underlining those sentences in books which stated views with which he agreed, or imagined he agreed; it was Turnbull who supplied the balance, the sensible balance of laughter to the proceedings. He had a quick and calculating brain which was never slow to discover to him the idiocy, the humour of their condition.⁶³

The presence of an 'enormous volume of discoveries' in which Walsh and Turnbull jot down aphorisms, poems and statements on 'the Ego, the Soul, the Rights of Man,

Malthusianism' and other assorted topics⁶⁴ is of significance, both to the mental growth of Clifton and to the third volume of Durrell's early trilogy. The format of The Black Book (1938) is quite similar to that of the Clifton-Turnbull volume, for the latter 'in parts . . . represented a kind of mental duel with Turnbull',⁶⁵ while the novel is characterised by the alternation of authorial comment by 'Lawrence Lucifer',⁶⁶ and extracts from the diary of the deceased 'Death Gregory, Esq.'. ⁶⁷ The most striking reference tying the two novels together, however, is in a post-card from Turnbull.

In the black book I found a queer motto of yours and deciphered it with a magnifying-glass. It is the best you could have chosen.⁶⁸

The remarks in 'the black book' are of relevance, for they point up the struggle which Walsh Clifton is undergoing. It is interesting, too, that Durrell has placed them after the incident with Ruth and Gordon which resulted in Walsh's first clear view of his own position in relation to society. The following exchange between Clifton and Turnbull exemplifies, we are lead to assume, the kind of thing the book contains.

Under his remark:

The perfect man (i.e. psychically)
is not moved by the values which are
imposed on him by upbringing, etc.
To be swayed by imposed values, hate,
patriotism, etc., is to be vulnerable.

Was scrawled in block capitals:
But what concessions must one make
to society, and the needs of society?
Obviously some. You have not expressed
this clearly.

Under this weighty exchange of blows
 [Walsh] had scrawled:

I know, damn you. As far as I can
make out, Society is all wrong, but I
can't stop the thing from working. Pity,
eh?⁶⁹

Walsh's concern with society and its values is also a concern with his own inability to express his feelings and his discoveries to the father who had sent him 'home' at great expense to be educated.⁷⁰ The society which he sees as 'all wrong' is the society of which his father and his Aunt Brenda are a part and, reading through the 'volume of discoveries' in an effort to rationalize some of its content for presentation to his parent, he begins to wonder if there is really 'anything in this mass of ill-expressed writing worth sacrificing the code of the average man for.' Nonetheless, 'it seemed to represent something very definite to him -- an achievement -- an advance along the path to . . . to what exactly?'⁷¹

The final entry which Walsh makes in 'the black book', the entry which Turnbull later reveals that he has read and deciphered, is the final statement in Book II of the position which Walsh has reached. It is followed immediately by a similar kind of prophetic dream to that which ended Book I, but this time a dream in which he sees

the death of his father from the bite of a cobra. The dream itself is succeeded by a scene with the head master in which the boy is told of his father's death, and Walsh's taking of a leave of absence from school on compassionate grounds.⁷² This entry is the ultimate rationale, not only for what follows in the remainder of Book II, but also for his exploration of the bohemian world of London in Book III and, most important, his letter of farewell to Turnbull which is the "Epilogue" to the novel.

That night, before going to bed, Walsh took down the book, and after a painful half-hour's thought wrote down his last discovery. It was by far the most important one he had ever made. In its final draft it read:

All philosophy seems to lead me towards a perfect spiritual detachment -- a divorce from the world, and therefore towards sterility and deadness. Let me be content to say: I am, and content to "be" as fully as possible.

Under this last entry in the book he scrawled, illegibly, so that Turnbull might not read it, No Shame.⁷³

The final entry in the 'volume of discoveries', coupled with the news of his father's death, is the climax of Book II for Durrell's 'pied piper of lovers'. Chapters VI and VII reaffirm the original symbiotic relationship with nature which first appeared in Book I, as Walsh Clifton returns to Hangar and the spot on the cliffs where

Gordon had explained the 'No Shame' motto to him. Lying with his face in the damp grass, he asks, '"Benediction, O my mother"', of the earth.⁷⁴ At the same time, and because of this reaffirmation, the boy moves quickly away from 'the English Death', 'the fear of a fickle and futile opinion, [the] mental sterility and cowardice of the thousand and one dreary shams of middle-class society'.⁷⁵ The break with Brenda is accomplished with surprising ease,⁷⁶ in great part because of his father's death, but Book II ends with the knowledge that he can never return 'to see these things again; to turn to them with a laugh, denying them as the inconsequent hurts of boyhood'.⁷⁷

The new 'freedom' which Walsh Clifton feels at the end of Book II becomes only a transient thing in Book III, as he moves from Dulwich to London. If Book II is reminiscent of Thomas Hughes's Tom Brown's School Days, Book III contains echoes of George Gissing's New Grub Street and Wyndham Lewis's The Apes of God, for it is Walsh's introduction both to the difficulties of making a living by writing and to the pseudo-literati of Bloomsbury. The former experience he acquires second-hand through his relationship with an acquaintance of Turnbull, Robin Ames, and Ames's friends, Russell and Isobel. The ultimate result of this association with the London bohemians is foreshadowed quite early in

Chapter I in Walsh's encounter with Ulalia Swoop.

Having walked round London, Walsh makes his way to Gannet Street and the address which Turnbull has sent him.

There was no trace of Robin Ames's name on the door: but with a shock of surprise he noticed the name Ulalia Swoop, printed in green ink on a soiled card. It was the name of a lady novelist who had become famous by writing pseudo-critical life histories of the Post-Impressionist painters, the which were tinctured with grotesque exercises in sensational fiction which stimulated her sales in an alarming manner⁷⁸

From this short description, it is obvious that Ulalia Swoop is an "archape" in terms of Lewis's scathing satire on the Bloomsbury group. Walsh's unwitting encounter with the lady at the open door of her second-floor flat is an hilarious one while, at the same time, revelatory. Having been an innocent bystander in a three-sided altercation involving the landlady, an impoverished tenant and "the ape", Walsh begins to make his way to the third floor and Robin Ames.

Smiling politely he said, as he slowly lifted his bag:

"You make many things clear. Next time I collide with you I shall know exactly what to do. I shall knock you down and trample on your glasses."

As the door of her flat crashed behind her he became aware of a sheet of notepaper pinned to a panel. It bore the motto: "Swoop: bell out of order: rap."⁷⁹

The influence of Wyndham Lewis's Time and Western Man becomes apparent in a lengthy discussion of art, of which Walsh is, as in his previous encounter with bohemians, merely an innocent bystander. Lewis's thinking on time, space, modern art -- all these gradually become apparent in this portion of the novel, and his influence will be discussed in more detail in the conclusion to this section on Pied Piper. Robin Ames's remarks early in Book III are worth quoting at this stage, however.

"Damn you," said Robin; "we want more real simplicity of purpose, more singleness of aim, less of the flatulent theorizing and self-searching. We want painters, not carbon copies of Roger Fry's essays. Painters, curse it. Not these piffling little theorists, and self-conscious anemics. You can only realize yourself in and through your subject and your medium. You must treat yourself, the essential yourself, that is, which will be evident in your production, as an incidental; not as the all in all, the one and only"

"We are, are we not, the one generation with clockwork guts? Robot-minded hyper-super-steel and reinforced concrete."⁸⁰

Interestingly enough, this is just the sort of 'theorizing' which Walsh comes to reject later in Book III. Durrell has subtly, under the guise of "truth", already condemned Robin Ames and the bohemians as a whole in this speech.

Walsh's rendering of an anonymous 15th Century poem,

"Quia Amore Languedo", which he has set to music, stirs his three new friends to reflection, and prompts Isobel's tearful outburst, "'I hate us . . . I hate our miserable little passions"'.⁸¹ This Christian poem, in which the speaker is Christ, is only given in part,⁸² and it is impossible to tell from the lines given in the novel that this is a religious poem.⁸³ Thus it is that, in an indirect way, Durrell introduces 'love' in a context which is neither courtly nor sexual, and begins to give it a definition which is ultimately made clear twelve years later in Cefalû (1947).⁸⁴ In all, however, Robin, Russell and Isobel are each in their own way quite helpful in Walsh's getting established in his 'new life'. On his own, Walsh wanders round London, getting to know especially the side of it which comes through at night. The 'mighty heart' of Wordsworth's "Upon Westminster Bridge" still beats for Walsh Clifton, but Wordsworth's joy in the city at dawn becomes Walsh's growing uneasiness in 'a [dark] world of which half-silence and fear were the keynotes'.⁸⁵

Chapter III is one of ironic contrasts. The opening pages of the chapter show the gradual development of the artist's eye for detail,⁸⁶ and Walsh is considered an artist simply because of the environment in which he lives.

Once, as he stood there [on the
grating over a basement bakery] . . .
a man . . . came to the grating and
handed him two huge chunks of

newly-baked bread . . ., smiling
very kindly upon him:

"I get lots of you poor
artists round 'ere. Always
'ungry, aren't yer?"⁸⁷

But, while Walsh is fascinated by the sights and smells of the city, and by the people he encounters, there is not the symbiotic relationship present which he had with either the hill country of India or the cliffs at Hangar. The "reality" of Kurseong and Hangar is replaced in his mind by the dream-like quality of London by night, and one particular passage is an obvious echo of Plato's cave allegory, placed in a 20th Century urban setting.

On these late walks he would often be filled with the feeling that he alone among the living trod the gloomy streets; his moving body and the feel of his clothes hanging on him, they were the only knowledge of substance in an illusory world. Even the sleek and silent men who stood night-long at the street-corners, and the women with their chalk-pale vermillion-rouged masks hiding what little self was left them, were but puzzling symbols of actualities that only existed in the squalid turbulence of the daytime.⁸⁸

The growth of the artist in Walsh Clifton is set against the pseudoartistic life of Bloomsbury. The sense of illusion which he feels with London as a whole is magnified in a curiously religious way, first on a night when he cannot sleep, and then at a party 'at Conroy's place'.⁸⁹ The first occurrence echoes Blake's

"London" and its condemnation of a city ruled over by

'Nobadaddy'.

. . . once he imagined he heard . . .
the cry: No God! No God! No God!
but when he started up and uncovered
his ears he recognized it to be
the sounds of taxi-horns at the
end of the street.⁹⁰

The party is composed almost totally, in Robin's words,

of "arch-bastards . . . , the whole bunch. Tarty artists
and artistic tarts".⁹¹ Here Walsh first encounters the

overt Lesbianism of 'Minnie and Kate' and the equally
blatant homosexuality of 'Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Foote'.⁹²

and, although Isobel expresses anger and disgust at their
'indecent' conduct,⁹³ Walsh still retains the attitude

which he expressed at school. His only reply to Robin's
"Live and let live" is an amendment, "Live and let

love" which he repeats at each new encounter.⁹⁴

It is not until he has been given some absinth by

Conroy and has consequently become drunk that Walsh

realizes he is witnessing an horrendous magnification

and exhibition of what Isobel had called 'our miserable

little passions'. Walsh can categorize the people at

Conroy's party only by comparing them to 'the mandrills

in rut at the Zoo'.⁹⁵ His wonder at the 'mysteries of

life' as explained by the native boy in Book I and the

feeling which he had for Ruth in Book II bear no relation

to what he sees going on around him. In Kurseong and at Hangar, the symbiotic relationship with the earth had obtained and the natural system of things had a religious significance for him. What he sees at the party is a kind of blasphemy for Walsh, and he identifies his anger as something more than 'animal-jealousy'.

It was the horror of human beings
penned together like that, commingling
their lusts and their sweats

Lust was something too fine-tempered,
too supple, to be blunted and soiled
by a mob of chattering starlings⁹⁶

Just as he echoed De Gourmont's 'natural philosophy of love' in the earlier books of the novel when dealing with the sexual instinct, so, too, Durrell illustrates in the party sequence some of De Gourmont's thought, this time on the 'morality' of civilized man as an aberration.

In man, . . . sexual fear, shame,
has taken a thousand forms which, for
the most part, seem to have no longer
any relation to the original feeling
whence they are derived. One notices
however that if the milieu where the
couple finds itself is such that no
attack, no ridicule is to be feared,
shame vanishes, in part, or entirely,
according to the degree of security,
and the degree of excitement. For a
crowd of populace on a fete night
there is hardly any modesty save
"legal modesty"; the example of one
bolder couple is enough, if there is
no authority to be feared, to set
loose all the appetites⁹⁷

Book III, Chapter III is the end, to all intents and

purposes, of "the education of Walsh Clifton" in terms of the cultural system in which he has been immersed, and of which he has been the victim, since the beginning of Book II. Immediately after the party, in a reflective and certainly prophetic mood, he says to Isobel,

"I'm going on to something else.
I can't find any fresh life here
among this bunch of thumb-sucking
apes."98

His final association with bohemia is his first and only sexual association with Isobel, and it is a fitting farewell, for he indulges his own lust in the same way as the guests at Conroy's party had indulged theirs, with no thought to the purity of the sexual act. In the early light of morning, awakening to an inquisitive Isobel at his side, he finally vents the pent-up frustration he has felt for what he has seen of the "artistic life" since leaving school, and his words echo his earlier reaction to Ruth's motto, 'No Shame'.

"Damn it!" he said furiously . . . ,
"will you never be able to do a
thing without questioning its
causes? Have you never wanted to
do a thing for its own sake? Damn
you, Isobel, that's what I mean
. . . . Not only you, Russell, Robin,
everyone You won't accept
life for what it is -- you put up
hundreds of piffling little barriers
against it, against people, against
yourselves. You bunch of deluded
incompetents. You're afraid,
everyone of you Scared
pink--" [.]99

Chapter IV centres solely on Walsh's opportunity for a job, the scoring of ballads for publication, ironically suggested by Robin Ames on the basis of the "Quia Amore Languet" fragments which Walsh had sung earlier. In Chapter V, Walsh goes round to see Garland, a music publisher, and sings through two ballads for him. Garland rejects the ballads, but finds 'a scrap of melody' in one of them which he shows Walsh how to convert into '"Jazz, begod"'.¹⁰⁰ This is the first time that Walsh has become aware of the integrity of the artist, especially as applied to himself, and although he takes Garland's cheque for fifty pounds, he has definite reservations about it.

. . . but that someone should
disembowel his ballad and reassemble
the tripes to make a jiggling little
ragtime of the thing, that was
annoying. More than annoying, he
told himself, unthinkable when you
reflected that the same ballad had
made Isobel cry¹⁰¹

Nonetheless, Clifton decides that, if there is money to be made in writing jazz melodies, then he will compose. 'Jazz was not hard to write'.¹⁰²

Immediately following his interview with Garland, there is a contrasting section in which Walsh enters the British Museum for the first time. This contrast of the present and the past is enlightening, for it shows that, whatever the reader might have thought of Walsh's taking

money for a bastardization of his own work, there is still integrity in him. His attitude to Garland and jazz is paralleled by his attitude to 'scholars'. The 'ever-lasting inferno of fruitless knowledge',¹⁰³ which is the Museum is humorous for Walsh. 'Smilingly he estimated the expense of spirit in the accumulation of useless lore'.¹⁰⁴ His own public schooling, as we have seen, was all but 'useless' to Walsh Clifton, aside from his association with Turnbull and the independent thinking of 'the black book'. That 'enormous volume of discoveries' had 'seemed to represent . . . an advance along the path to . . . to what exactly?',¹⁰⁵ And now 'these multitudes of old men, of gaunt women' in the British Museum recall to him his own reading, and he asks, 'How far [are] they from wisdom? How far from life?',¹⁰⁶ There are, however, two consolations for Clifton in the British Museum. The first is that

they had been here too, . . . the poets, the lovers, the artists. They had handled the books he handled. But they had taken what knowledge [the books] had to give -- and left.¹⁰⁷

The second is Ruth.

His quite fortuitous discovery of Ruth, after so long a time, drives all other considerations from Walsh Clifton's mind. His concern with the temporal mode, with culture, vanishes and is replaced by the spatial mode

associated earlier in Book II with the same girl.¹⁰⁸

With the return of the spatial mode, there is the return of the apocalyptic and cathartic nature of laughter which is only possible within a relationship such as theirs.

Kneeling upright, they began to
laugh, silently, hysterically,
clutching each other, and each
gust of laughter seemed to be
the gathering of newer, purer breath,
for the rejuvenation of their tired
bodies.¹⁰⁹

The revelation that Ruth has consumption comes as a shock to Walsh, and he begins to make plans for earning enough money, through Garland, to effect her recovery.¹¹⁰ Ruth is the first consumptive or tubercular female in a line which stretches to Melissa in The Alexandria Quartet, but it is only in relation to Ruth that the symbolism is ever made clear. In Chapter VI, Durrell reintroduces the woman doctor, now retired, who had attended at Clifton's birth in Burma in the "Prologue".¹¹¹ This is a stilted, obvious device, used merely to tie the book together. Yet it is Maclean who has diagnosed Ruth's illness, and who gives the true diagnosis to Walsh; that is, that Ruth is not consumptive but has 'valvular disease'.¹¹² The ancient association of the spirit with the breath is here allied with the concept of the heart as the seat of 'love'. If we are to understand the meaning of the presence of phthisic women in the rest of

Durrell's work, we must recognize that disease of the spirit is here closely associated with disease of the heart. This is as true of Iolanthe in Tunc (1968) as it is of Ruth.

There is only one choice to be made by Walsh and Ruth, and that, in Ruth's words, is 'the one that means life for us both'.¹¹³ Thus it is that the "Epilogue", a letter from Walsh to Turnbull, is written from a cottage in Devon which

no one but a writer of fairy-tales
could have devised . . . as a hut
for his children, or a home for
himself and his fey wife.¹¹⁴

The writer of fairy-tales and the subject are one: Walsh Clifton, the 'pied piper of lovers' now in consort with a 'woman [who] is a product of such magic' as stems from the relationship she has with the earth, a relationship which Clifton shares. At this point in the novel, Walsh is totally preoccupied with the spatial mode, and his comments to Turnbull foreshadow, in a tenuous way, the difficulties which Durrell later expressed in his 'space-time soup-mix' attempt to communicate with The Alexandria Quartet.

But then you know and I know the
eternal quibble with words. Failing
to express to others what you have
expressed to yourself. I think
sculpture is the medium in which
to express. Space against Time

curves and stresses, structures
and dimensions. How in hell can
I express the volume of things by
daubing ink on paper? In future
I'll send you deformed lumps of
clay, each representing a letter.
So abstract and so satisfying.¹¹⁵

Walsh is making a living writing jazz for Garland,
with Ruth composing the lyrics ('The two which we've
done while we've been here are called, respectively
"Hold Your Woman" . . . and "Never Come Back".).¹¹⁶ In
fact, Walsh says, 'next month we move across the billow,
trusting in this profession for our bread'.¹¹⁷ He has
become, in Ruth's words, 'De Gourmont's faun',¹¹⁸ for
he has returned to the natural world from which he had
been wrenched so many years before, and has left forever
the urban world of 'the English Death'. As he tells
Turnbull,

Somehow this country, this bare
stooping down, has released me,
though from what and how I cannot
tell. I have had these experiences
before somewhere. I feel I've been
imprisoned for a long time. I
begin to feel the earth under my
thighs and loins again¹¹⁹

He has become again, although he cannot remember, the boy
who

Saw the Himalayas like lambs there
Stir their huge joints and lay
Against his innocent thigh a stony
thigh.¹²⁰

The importance of the body, which Durrell had

learned from De Gourmont, is now paramount for Walsh Clifton, and the senses are supreme. The "Epilogue" to the novel is the record, not only of a return to the natural world, but of a rejection of the cultural codes which Walsh has learned in favour of an attempted dissolution of self in a union with that natural world. Walsh Clifton is on the point of death: but a death only in relation to the imposed cultural code which he has rejected. He will shortly be "dead" to the whole of England and what it stands for. As Evans-Wentz points out, a 'book of the dead'

inculcates, by its own peculiar
method, an Art of Dying and Coming
forth into a New Life¹²¹

It is the 'Art of Dying' which Walsh Clifton is practising at the end of Pied Piper of Lovers. As he states to Turnbull,

I believe in nothing, neither Popes nor principalities; kings, queens, aces, or jacks do not touch me. No duties, no obligations I know something, though, that's very startling -- absolute mental dynamite. That is: "I am, and quite soon I will not be." Isn't that enough? Or have I misstated it all? I can't tell. My sensibility is the only laboratory in which work is carried out that interests me at all. An enormous sensory apparatus to be fed and exhausted, in the activities of which I am so absorbed that I will

not turn to look at anything else.
I am, I will not be. The doctrine
of a perfect selfishness.¹²²

All this is not to say that Pied Piper of Lovers is a brilliant first novel -- it is far from that.¹²³ But it is important if we are to follow the development of Durrell's view of life, as the commentary on the novel shows. The strongest influence on Durrell at the time of the writing of Pied Piper was Remy de Gourmont's The Natural Philosophy of Love, as is evident from the number of times Durrell's narrative almost exactly copies the remarks of De Gourmont. Whether or not Durrell read a translation of De Gourmont which included the 1932 introduction by Burton Rascoe it is impossible to say. Nonetheless, some of Rascoe's comments are enlightening with regard to incidents and opinions (either stated or implied) which appear in the novel. For example, the rejection of Cartesian dualism, which occurs in Book II of the novel,¹²⁴ is a statement of, in Rascoe's words,

Gourmont's principal philosophic concept that intelligence is anti-natural and the result of a long process in defeating the elementary purpose of nature which is the "perpetual return to unity" through fecundation and birth.¹²⁵

John Clifton's description of his son as a jungli,¹²⁶ reminiscent as it is of Kipling's Mowgli and in part of his Kim, is also a good example of what we have called

Walsh's symbiotic relationship with the earth, and what De Gourmont saw as a fundamental unity in nature. The incident with the head master, when Walsh is initiated into 'the mysteries of life', apposed as it is to the earlier initiation with the native boy, is again an echo of De Gourmont, this time on Darwin's The Descent of Man. For De Gourmont points out that 'Darwin, truckling to the religiose pudibundery of his race, has almost wholly neglected the actual facts of sex'.¹²⁷ There are other examples in the text, some of which have been pointed out in the commentary, to show how great an influence De Gourmont had on Pied Piper of Lovers.

Walsh Clifton certainly does not give in to 'the religiose pudibundery of his race', although he is subject to it even while in India, but he does have a concept of Godhood: 'my private God', as he calls it.¹²⁸ The pantheistic quality inherent in both the early and later expression of the boy's association with nature cannot come from De Gourmont, who was intent in not falling into the religious entanglements in which he saw Darwin trapped. De Gourmont's 'unity' is a purely physical one: 'Man is not the culmination of nature, he is in Nature, he is one of the unities of life, that is all'.¹²⁹ Yet the expression of an approach to unity which Clifton makes in the "Epilogue" is, we suspect, a product of

Walsh's 'deplorable habit of underlining those sentences in books which stated views with which he agreed, or imagined he agreed'.¹³⁰ Wyndham Lewis's Time and Western Man was first published in 1927: that is, if we are to accept the chronology of Pied Piper as being roughly parallel with Durrell's own, while Durrell/Clifton was at school.¹³¹ There is every probability that Durrell had read Lewis before he wrote Pied Piper, and G. S. Fraser bears this out in the opening sentence of his book. 'Wyndham Lewis,' he says, '. . . became, through Time and Western Man, a formative influence on the young Lawrence Durrell's theory of art.'¹³² Lewis was also, as Fraser points out, a 'painter, novelist, poet, satirist . . . [and] informal polemical philosopher',¹³³ and it is in the latter category that Lewis influenced Durrell's concept of deity as it relates to the individual.

Lewis's chapter on "God as Reality" is the source for Walsh Clifton's views as expressed in the "Epilogue" to the novel.¹³⁴ The two most important points in Clifton's statement are that which indicates his sensual preoccupation, and the cryptic "'I am, and quite soon I will not be,'" for they tie directly to Lewis. 'Human individuality,' Lewis says,

is best regarded as a kind of
artificial godhood. When most

intensely separated from our neighbour and from all other things -- most 'ourselves', as we say -- we are farthest away, clearly, from an Absolute, or any kind of Unity. Yet, in another sense, we are nearest to it.

Everything analogically indicates God as a great Unity. We, when most individual (least automatic, and least religiously or otherwise entranced), possess most a similar unity to that we must attribute to God. When we 'expand' most (to use a favourite word of James) -- reach out towards Deity and melt ourselves in a 'cosmic' orgasm of feeling -- we are least ourselves and possess least centre and organic unity.¹³⁵

In other words, Lewis is saying that assertion of ego results in the ability to realize 'Unity'. Outside the religious systems of Bradley and Spinoza, to use Lewis's examples,¹³⁶ and in a purely personal sense, affirmation of ego is affirmation of unity, and therefore of godhead. Walsh Clifton's final remarks on the subject, an attempted clarification to Turnbull, are a summation of Lewis's comment.

I am. I will not be. The doctrine of a perfect selfishness.¹³⁷

In terms of the traditional Christian theology, the assertion of ego is made always in the face of a Perfect and Absolute Deity. Thus the fall of Lucifer is the result of such an affirmation. In terms of Clifton's 'personal God', however, the opposite is true. This

'personal God' is associated with the cosmos and is known through the senses alone. Hence it is that assertion of the self, and the consequent denial of the Absolute, is to be desired, and that unity with 'the One' is possible in Lewis's terms. Thus Lewis:

We are against a mystical 'belief', then (in the special sense of Belief in a Divinity), though not against rational belief; we consider it incompatible with 'belief' in the more universal sense of experiencing and holding in ourself the sensation of reality. It is as thieves only -- a thief of the real -- that we can exist, or as parasites upon God. The Absolute, we think, crushes, and is meant by its hierophants to crush, the personal life.¹³⁸

Lewis's influence on Durrell's theory of art, at least with reference to Pied Piper of Lovers, would be difficult to specify exactly. If we take Walsh Clifton's rejection of the Bloomsbury bohemians in Book III as a result of the theorizing to which he has been subjected both at Robin Ames's flat and at Conroy's party, and see in it a reflection of a growing 'theory of art', then a portion of Lewis's "The Value of the Doctrine behind Subjective Art" (1927) is enlightening.

According to present arrangements, in his dealings with nature [the artist or the writer] is always almost apriorist, we suggest.

Further, he tends to lose his power of observation . . . altogether. Yet observation must be the only guarantee for his usefulness, as much as of his independence. So he takes his nature, in practice, from theoretic fields, and resigns himself to see only what conforms to his syllabus of patterns. He deals with the raw life, thinks he sees arabesques in it; but in fact the arabesques that he sees more often than not emanate from his theoretic borrowing, he has put them there. It is a nature-for-technical-purposes of which he is conscious. Scarcely any longer can he be said to control or even be in touch with the raw at all, that is the same as saying that he is not in touch with nature: he rather dredges and excavates things that are not objects of direct perception, with a science he has borrowed; or, upon the surface, observes only according to a system opinion which hides from him any but a highly selective reality.¹³⁹

The "Epilogue", while seemingly concerned with a kind of non-mystical religious experience, can also be interpreted as a comment on the position of the artist vis à vis the natural world in which he moves and from which he selects his material. Clifton's position is then antithetical to that which Lewis denigrates in his essay. 'My sensibility is the only laboratory in which work is carried out that interests me at all.'¹⁴⁰ The problem here is that we cannot prove whether or not Durrell had read the article in question, or that he might have had access to copies

of the review. The only basis for conjecture is the high probability of the existence of a real-life model for Binhook, the English teacher who provided Clifton and Turnbull with much of their reading matter. So much of the novel is autobiography that such is probably the case, and so Durrell might well have had access to back issues of The Monthly Criterion.

We must remember that Wyndham Lewis was a vital and well-publicized figure in the arts in the 1920s and 1930s. Further, Durrell had read Time and Western Man, as a reply from Miller, dated December 6th, 1936, shows. 'Yes,' says Miller, 'I read Wyndham Lewis's Time and the [sic] Western Man. I like him as a permanent enemy of the people.'¹⁴¹ It is likely, then, that Durrell had also read other pieces by Lewis, and Robin Ames's remarks on the self in literature echo the remarks of 'The Enemy' in "If So The Man You Are", from Lewis's One-Way Song (1933).

Lewis: I have a lot to say about myself
 Anent low matters centering in pelf?
 'Must you remind us that all art's
 a trade?
 What has the artist's self to do with
 what he has made?'
 Upon that you may be enlightened on
 the spot.
 No artist can 'be himself' and
 boil-the-pot.¹⁴²

Durrell: "You can only realize yourself in
 and through your subject and your
 medium. You must treat yourself,
 the essential yourself, that is,

which will be evident in your production, as an incidental; not as the all in all, the one and only. . . ."143

More will be said, with reference to Panic Spring, about Durrell's views on the last line of 'The Enemy's' remarks. More will be said, too, about Durrell's view of himself in The Black Book as an 'enemy of the people'. Durrell had read Lewis: how much of his work before Pied Piper we can only guess, although Time and Western Man was a definite influence.

G.S. Fraser, in the somewhat off-hand remarks he makes about writers who have influenced Durrell, mentions Norman Douglas, D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, Patrick Leigh-Fermor, John Buchan, P. G. Wodehouse, Rudyard Kipling -- along with Wyndham Lewis and others.¹⁴⁴ As we shall see, these influences and more are all present in Durrell. Certainly, they cannot help but be: every artist is influenced in some way by those writing around him and by the tradition in which he himself is writing. But they are not all influences on Durrell's philosophy; most of them have been influences on his style or content, and some only incidentally. For example, John Buchan's novels were a great influence on Durrell in the writing of White Eagles Over Serbia (1957), while P. G. Wodehouse was an obvious influence on the 'Antrobus' stories of

Esprit de Corps (1957), Stiff Upper Lip (1958) and Sauve Qui Peut (1966).

As far as the development of Durrell's philosophy is concerned, the development of 'the book of the dead', Remy de Gourmont and Wyndham Lewis are the clearest influences of this sort on Pied Piper of Lovers. As we have seen, the passages in the novel which echo, parallel and even paraphrase passages from De Gourmont or from Lewis are those passages in which the early expression of Durrell's philosophy is to be found. But we cannot attempt to formulate that philosophy until we have seen its first stage in the complete trilogy. We must therefore pass to a consideration of Panic Spring (1937).

CHAPTER TWO

"LANDSCAPE WITH LITERARY FIGURES"

Pied Piper of Lovers, as we have seen, takes its narrative progression from the biography of Walsh Clifton. Panic Spring does not have the same linear scheme as its predecessor. Instead, it is a novel in the spatial mode, a collage in which several characters are juxtaposed. In a way, Clifton's remarks to Turnbull on 'the eternal quibble with words' in Pied Piper are a foreshadowing of the technique of Panic Spring. That 'quibble' is a result of the failure

to express to others what you have expressed to yourself. I think sculpture is the medium in which to express. Space against Time curves and stresses, structures and dimensions. How in hell can I express the volume of things by daubing ink on paper?¹

It is with 'structures and dimensions' that Durrell is concerned in the style of Panic Spring.

In the preceding discussion of Pied Piper, we noted Walsh Clifton's preoccupation with the spatial rather than the temporal mode. We noted, too, that, in the "Epilogue", 'the writer of fairy-tales and the subject are one'.² Panic Spring is subtitled 'a romance', and as such it shares certain affinities with the Märchen, or fairy-tale, the most important of which are the Märchenwelt and the attitude toward time.³ The tradition of the Märchen shows that there

is as much concern with the Märchenwelt, the fabulous world, as there is with the tale itself. For the true Märchenwelt is a timeless world, outside the world of men and their preoccupation with the clock-hands of time. There is a parallel here with the "other world" into which one passes after death, when linear, diurnal time is no longer of consequence but existence is of prime importance.

The Märchenwelt of Panic Spring is the island of Mavrodaphne, and the narrative is involved on one level with the opposition of linear and "existential" time.⁴ The problem of "existential" versus linear time, and their relation to the tradition of the Märchen, is perhaps best expressed by Lord Dunsany.

I have said that no time passed
at all in Elfland. Yet the
happening of events is in itself
a manifestation of time, and no
event can occur unless time pass.
Now it is thus with time in
Elfland: in the eternal beauty
that dreams in that honied air
nothing stirs or fades or dies,
nothing seeks its happiness in
movement or change or a new thing,
but has its ecstasy in the
perpetual contemplation of all
the beauty that has ever been
Yet if the energies of the wizard's
mind arose to meet a new thing,
then that power that had laid its
calm upon Elfland and held back
time troubled the calm awhile,
and time for awhile shook Elfland.

Cast anything into a deep pool from
 a land strange to it, where some
 great fish dreams, and green weeds
 dream, and heavy colours dream,
 and light sleeps; the great fish
 stirs, the colours shift and change,
 the green weeds tremble, the light
 wakes, a myriad of things know slow
 movement and change; and soon the
 whole pool is still again.⁵

There is a contradiction in Dunsany's statement, arising from his attempt to define "existential" time in terms of linear time. Thus the "passing" of time is impossible in a land in which 'no time passed at all'. But the fact that Dunsany contradicts himself does not render invalid the metaphor which he uses to explain and illustrate his comment. The image of the pool characterizes the time of Elfland as volumetric, rather than linear, and thus illustrates the basis for his original comment that 'no time passed at all in Elfland'.

Linear time, the concept of the "time-line" on which we live and along which we progress, is a product of the attempt to concretize an abstract which we know exists but cannot "prove". Thus it is that the term "diurnal" refers now to a presumably concrete and finite number of units, and the term "year" refers to a composite of a finite number of "diurnal" units, and so forth. The process and product of measurement,

then, has replaced in importance that which was originally measured, and man has become a linear creature more involved with "clock time" than with the volumetric time which Dunsany's pool image illustrates. The natural basis of "clock time", the movement of the earth both in relation to its own axis and to its sun, has been rationalized out of all proportion, and the concept of volumetric or "infinite" time has been relegated to the philosophers and theologians.⁶

This digression is not irrelevant, for the concept of time is extremely important in a number of Durrell's works, not just in Panic Spring. Just as Dunsany creates "another world" in The King of Elfland's Daughter, so Durrell either creates "another world" -- such as Mavrodaphne -- or sets a part of the "known" world aside and attributes to it both the "otherworldliness" of Elfland and the volumetric time which Dunsany describes as obtaining therein.

Panic Spring is the first of Durrell's books set on an island, and with "otherworldliness" and volumetric time in mind, it is easy to see another link which Mavrodaphne has with literary tradition -- a link with the insulae fortunatae, the "islands of the Blessed", where both criteria also apply. This is clear from the synopsis of the development of the insulae

fortunatae tradition which S. B. Liljegren gives in his Studies on the Origin and Early Tradition of English Utopian Fiction. 'Homer,' Liljegren says,

conceived the abode of the Blessed as a country far away, on the confines of the earth, and it signified an existence after death.

Hesiod seems to think that Okeanos is the ocean, not a river, and in consequence the country of the Blessed develops into islands

Several centuries later, the conception appears as the "nesos makaron," the Island of the Blessed, with Pindar. His island is not the country of the dead, simply, but a place where a few favoured mortals are taken while still living.

Existence with Pindar thus stresses the leisure and the aesthetic view of life free from everyday cares and labour⁷

The peculiar concept of death which is applicable to Walsh Clifton at the end of Pied Piper of Lovers⁸ is the link with Homer's 'abode of the Blessed', while Hesiod's view of that country as islands is, in its particular development by Pindar, a further link between Mavrodaphne and the insulae fortunatae tradition. There is one more link, not as obvious as the above: the name of the island itself. The Greek word 'mavro' does, as Durrell has Marlowe translate it, mean "black".⁹ Used metaphorically, however, it also means 'to make

powerless, to make obscure or forgotten',¹⁰ thus giving Mavrodaphne another link, however tenuous, with the "other world" of the classical tradition.

These points are as true of the 'island books' -- Prospero's Cell, Reflections On A Marine Venus, and Bitter Lemons --, of Cefalù, and of The Alexandria Quartet, as they are of Panic Spring. The significance of the characteristics of "otherworldliness" in each of these works, and their relationship to the insulae fortunatae tradition, will be discussed in the course of the thesis. For now, we must return to Panic Spring.

Just as Walsh Clifton's remarks on 'the eternal quibble with words' foreshadow the techniques of Durrell's second novel, so, too, Panic Spring is tied to Pied Piper of Lovers through the presence of Clifton on Mavrodaphne. Chapter VII of Panic Spring is devoted to "Walsh". In fact, it may well be a chapter of Pied Piper which was excised and replaced by the "Epilogue" as a more satisfactory way of ending that novel. There are more details about the life of Ruth and Walsh as described in the "Epilogue", some of which tie directly to the former novel. For example, Walsh's reference to the jazz tunes which he and Ruth had been writing is paralleled in detail. Thus:

The two which we've done while we've been here are called, respectively "Hold Your Woman" . . . and "Never Come Back".¹¹

A cheque for thirty pounds on the mantelpiece and a letter from Garland saying: "Do you mind selling your soul? You do it well. This last tune of yours is good. As I see it you'll be rich before long. Ecstasy to be in Love is still selling mildly. But I anticipate bigger things from this one, Never Come Back."¹²

Garland is an echo from Pied Piper, and the Christmas card from 'Gordon, Ruth's brother, with a beautiful Greek stamp',¹³ and the suggestion that Ruth bring Walsh down to 'this Island',¹⁴ is a retrospective link between the two novels. These links are certainly not merely fortuitous ones, although they could be seen as the kind of "lifting" which a novelist might fall back on if he found himself in trouble at some stage in his writing. With all the possibilities in mind, we must nevertheless consider the "Walsh" chapter of Panic Spring an integral part of that novel.

This same section of Panic Spring, however, contains references to characters who appear in The Black Book. Consequently, Tarquin, the village schoolmaster near whom Walsh and Ruth lived in England, is a "memory" character in Panic Spring. Tarquin is not really presented as a character per se until he

appears in The Black Book. Thus it is that, through the presence of characters in two of the three novels, Durrell has provided links between the volumes of his early trilogy.

Remarking on the literary situation of the 1930s, Stephen Spender says,

From 1931 onwards, in common with many other people, I felt hounded by external events. There was ever-increasing unemployment in America, Great Britain, and on the Continent. The old world seemed incapable of solving its problems, and out of the disorder Fascist regimes were rising.

There was the feeling through all these years of having to race against time to produce a book or a poem. Not only was this disturbing to the stillness of attention necessary for creative work, but the life itself out of which the work grew was being borne away from under us. No wonder that the literature of this period is time-obsessed, time-tormented, as though beaten with rods of restless days.¹⁵

Time and 'external events' are the preoccupation of Christian Marlowe in the first chapter of Panic Spring, the "portrait" with which Marlowe is constantly compared by the reader throughout the rest of the novel. In the lounges of the 'Hotel Superbo, Brindisi', in which he is lodged, 'Revolution, naturally enough, was the topic of the hour -- revolution in general and the

Greek Revolution in particular'.¹⁶ A letter from Durrell to Miller, dated Spring 1936, replies: 'What news? Why no news, except local news, and God knows what with wars and the yapping of dictators, it's comforting enough'.¹⁷ This is the sort of letter Walsh Clifton might have written from Mavrodaphne, as Durrell wrote from Corfu, and it sheds the light of contemporaneity on Marlowe's visit to Mavrodaphne. The time with which Marlowe and his fellow-lodgers are concerned is linear time, exemplified always in how long the Greek Revolution will last, and if and when the boat will leave Brindisi for the Piraeus. Marlowe's companions are indeed 'time-obsessed, time-tormented, as though beaten with rods of restless days'.

There are seven Durrell letters dated 1936 in the Wickes collection, three of which are of particular importance to our consideration of Panic Spring, which was published in the following year. The first, which contains the remarks on revolution quoted above, also refers to

a new and facile novel being castrated by the bigwigs. First they agreed to let the word "fuck" stay in if it went thus: f--k; then f---; now the libraries might get touchy so they want ----. Or something milder. What with feeling ashamed and angry with myself for writing so cheaply,

and knowing the book isn't worth
 'a ---- either way, I don't know
 what to do.¹⁸

This is a most interesting comment, for the 'new and facile novel' to which Durrell refers can only be Panic Spring. A letter dated December 1936 indicates that 'the bigwigs' at 'Faber and Faber have put [Durrell] on a three-novel contract, starting with a cheap romance called Panic Spring, which is a leprous distillment . . .'.¹⁹ 'Actually,' Durrell goes on,

I am up against the wall properly now, just finishing a Black Book which Fabers will reject and rupture the contract, because it is good . . . BUT NOT POPULAR. I need a few months' revision on it. But there again I am shy of sending it to anyone because I have no copy.²⁰

As far as Panic Spring is concerned, the excision of the word "fuck", in any of its forms, was total, and it is even questionable, judging solely from the text, whether 'something milder' was substituted. Further, any speculation, arising from Durrell's description of the book as 'a leprous distillment', that the excised portion (or portions) of Panic Spring might have been either the basis for or have been inserted in The Black Book (just as the "Walsh" chapter of Panic Spring might have been a rejected ending for Pied Piper), is moot at

this stage. The important point is that Durrell considered Panic Spring 'cheap' and 'facile' even before it was published, and felt that 'the book [wasn't] worth a ---- either way': precisely the same opinion which Weigel and Fraser parroted thirty years later.

The second letter of importance to Panic Spring is dated Fall 1936. Here Durrell for the first time in the correspondence begins to deal seriously with what he calls his 'heraldic universe'. 'What I propose to do,' he says,

with all deadly solemnity, is to create my HERALDIC UNIVERSE quite alone. The foundation is being quietly laid. I AM SLOWLY BUT VERY CAREFULLY AND WITHOUT CONSCIOUS THOUGHT DESTROYING TIME. I have discovered that the idea of duration is false. We have invented it as a philosophic jack up to the idea of physical disintegration. THERE IS ONLY SPACE. A solid object has only three dimensions. Time, that old appendix, I've lopped off. So it needs a new attitude. An attitude without memory. A spatial existence in terms of the paper I'm writing on now at this moment.²¹

This comment contains certain echoes from Pied Piper, the most obvious being the relationship between Ruth's interest in heraldry²² and the 'heraldic universe', and the relationship between the 'spatial existence in terms of the paper I'm writing on now' and Walsh

Clifton's 'How in hell can I express the volume of things by daubing ink on paper?'.²³ What we have called the 'spatial mode', and have related both to Walsh Clifton in Pied Piper and to the technique of Panic Spring, involves a refutation of the 'temporal mode', and, in this case quite specifically, of Bergson's concept of durée. As Durrell says, 'I have discovered that the idea of duration is false. We have invented it as a philosophical jack up to the idea of physical disintegration'. Durrell's "discovery" is not unique with him, and was probably based on his reading of Lewis's Time and Western Man, for Lewis, in his condemnation of the "philosophy of time", has this to say about the 'time-man's' view of the solid object:

The analysis of the contemporary time-philosophy is so fanatically directed to disintegrate and to banish the bogey of 'concreteness,' that it would be impossible not to receive the impression of a peculiar hostility to 'the concrete,' in its most inclusive sense, in favour of something abstract and mental²⁴

By following Lewis, Durrell is flying in the face of his times, with their preoccupation with Einsteinian relativity. The importance of his letter to Miller is only obvious after an examination of the quotation. To begin with, his remark, 'THERE IS ONLY SPACE. A solid

object has only three dimensions', is a fairly obvious and even somewhat innocuous one. It is, however, the cause, and not the product, of the preceding comment, 'We have invented [duration] as a philosophic jack up to the idea of physical disintegration'. The point which Durrell is making here is that, in order to explain the disintegration of the 'solid object' in terms other than concrete, we have attributed that disintegration to the "ravages of time". Thus we have, in order to explain death, for example, created feeble aphorisms such as "Time will take its toll". By 'philosophic jack up', then, Durrell intends "philosophic palliative": we have invented duration in order to alleviate, but not cure, the inherent difficulties with which we meet in dealing with the concrete world. The object, then, exists concretely in a concrete world; it exists spatially and not temporally, except in the sense of volumetric time with which we dealt above. Thus it is that Dunsany's pool image is relevant to our discussion: for the pool image is an affirmation of the spatial mode, in which the relationship of concrete objects is the determinant of, and is determined by, "existence".

Durrell's 'heraldic universe', however, is not merely one in which the concrete is of paramount

importance. The Encyclopedia Of The Arts states, regarding heraldry, that

from the earliest times distinguishing emblems and symbolic devices have been worn by individuals and groups.²⁵

It is in the 'symbolic device' that the key to Durrell's 'heraldic universe' lies: his affirmation of the concrete and spatial as against the temporal, in conjunction with his use of the term 'heraldic', leads to the conclusion that, in the 'universe' which he is creating, the concrete object will take on the character of a symbol; it will stand for itself, and for something more than itself. The third letter to which we referred above, dated Fall 1936, contains an explanation of the use of the term 'heraldic', and in part of the 'heraldic universe'.

I chose the word "heraldic" for a double reason. First, because in the relation of the work to the artist it seemed to me that it expressed the exact quality I wanted. Also because in heraldry I seem to find that quality of magic and spatial existence which I want to tack on to art. Of course, as you say, one must make allowances for storing, parturition, experience and all that, involving time. But what I am trying to isolate is the exact moment of creation, in which the maker seems to exist heraldically. That is to say, time as a concept does not exist, but only as an attribute of matter -- decay, growth, etc. In that sense then,

it must be memoryless.

But for myself I am beginning to inhabit this curious HERALDIC UNIVERSE when I write. If it seems a bit precocious of me to be trying to invent my own private element to swim about in, it can't be helped.²⁶

There is one further point to be made regarding Durrell's 'heraldic universe' at this juncture: that is in regard his comment on 'the maker' -- 'what I am trying to isolate is the exact moment of creation, in which the maker seems to exist heraldically'. We have spent some time, in relation to Pied Piper of Lovers, discussing Durrell's view of the assertion of individuality, and have quoted Wyndham Lewis's remark, 'Human individuality is best regarded as a kind of artificial godhood'.²⁷ The timelessness of the 'heraldic universe', the position of 'the maker' therein, and the fact that Durrell was 'trying to invent [his] own private element to swim about in', lead to a conclusion regarding the artist which Durrell made clear in this admonition to Miller:

If it were possible you would like to go on saying I AM A MAN ad lib in order to hide the more terrible stage whisper I AM AN ARTIST and from there to the ultimate blinding conclusion IAMGOD!!! It is this role which confuses you by its limitless scope.²⁸

'The maker', then, assumes in his creative capacity what Lewis calls 'a kind of artificial godhood'. Just as the assertion of individuality is analogically an indication of the existence of God 'as a great unity',²⁹ so, too, the act of artistic creation is analogous to the Creation of all things by God. Thus it is that Durrell combines his rejection of 'the English Death' in favour of an asserted individuality with his movement towards what this writer has elsewhere called 'artistic consciousness'.³⁰

The 'heraldic universe' is much clearer in The Black Book than it is in Panic Spring. Yet even in that second novel, some of the elements which Durrell described in the letters to Miller quoted above are plain. We have already stated that, on one level, Panic Spring is involved with the opposition of linear time and the volumetric, "existential" time which we can now see is characteristic of the 'heraldic universe'. This opposition is pointed up in the religious views of Christian Marlowe, who has left England to write a book on the 'New Quietism'. Chapter VI: "The Portentous Pattern" begins with a quotation from Marlowe's work.

"It is curious and instructive to examine those processes by which the character of a place is made manifest; through the simple

necessities, the trivialities, the daily gains and losses it grows, unseen, unsuspected, quietly creating its impact on the receptive mind: until, in retrospect, the form emerges cleanly, comprehensible, having become a coherent whole, a spiritual entity.

"The quotidian manifestations, which are, so to speak, separate tesserae, contribute to the final mosaic, the contemplative pattern. The Pattern emerges through a routine; and the routine itself is the frame upon which the practical realisation of the modern Quietism is built."³¹

Compare the above with the description of 'Quietism' in An Encyclopedia of Religion.

Quietism: A 17th century group of mystics which held to a pessimistic doctrine of human nature and the correlative doctrine of the need for and the fact of divine initiative in man's salvation. God may act on man only as he surrenders himself utterly. Pure faith is beyond ideas and beliefs; pure love is without a love of any particular thing but a love for love's sake. Absolute calm unmixed with self ambition is the true receptive mind for divine grace.³²

Marlowe carries with him books by 'mostly quietist people': 'Molinos, Guyon, Bossuet and a crowd of others',³³ upon which he plans to base his research for 'Quietism Rediscovered'.³⁴ None of these authors are mentioned in the Durrell-Miller correspondence, although

both men were quick to suggest readings to one another, as the letters which Wickes has selected most obviously show. Not even 'Quietism' is mentioned. Durrell has been quoted in the "Introduction" as saying that he is a 'spare parts man'. What is the source, then, of this particular 'spare part'? Roy Perrott, commenting during a 1968 interview with Durrell, says, '[Durrell] dips into encyclopedias for esoteric bits of knowledge that he'll need for a book'.³⁵ In all likelihood, Durrell did, indeed, go to an encyclopedia for information, and the Encyclopaedia Britannica would seem to be the most obvious choice. The current edition of the Britannica has an excellent synopsis of Quietism which lists Molinos as the founder of the movement, and Madame Jeanne Marie Bouvier de la Motte Guýon as the propagator of 'a milder form of Quietism' which appeared in France.³⁶ Like the Encyclopedia of Religion, it also lists Bossuet -- but as the opponent, not proponent, of what came to be considered an heretical Christian sect. Has Durrell merely "lifted" the 'esoteric bits of knowledge' he needed for Panic Spring from the Encyclopaedia Britannica or a similar source? Or is he seriously intending Quietism as a viable philosophy in terms of the novel itself?

There are several approaches to these questions. The first is through the recognition of Bossuet as an opponent of the Quietist movement founded by Molinos, and the offhand statement by Marlowe which includes Bossuet as one of the 'mostly quietist people' who authored the books which he carries. This would indicate that Durrell has merely included Bossuet's name as being associated with the movement, without giving too much thought to the nature of that association.

The second approach is through the passage from Marlowe's 'Quietism Rediscovered' quoted above. Considering that Molinos' doctrine dealt with a pessimistic view of human nature; with 'the fact of divine initiative in man's salvation'; with 'pure faith' and 'pure love', the passage from Marlowe seems oddly out of place, dealing as it does with 'the character of a place'. It is not, however, out of place in terms of the Durrell canon. As we shall see, statements in Prospero's Cell, Reflections On A Marine Venus, Bitter Lemons, Cefalù and The Alexandria Quartet, along with such articles as "Landscape With Literary Figures", all show Durrell's continuing preoccupation with the concept of the deus loci, 'the spirit of place'. In fact, that preoccupation is so strong that

it leant itself as an apt title for Alan G. Thomas's recently issued Durrell miscellany.³⁷ Marlowe's remarks, then, are more a reflection of Durrell's own interest than they are of 'modern Quietism'.

The third approach to the question of the place of Quietism in Panic Spring is through the character of Marlowe himself, and through what "plot" there is in the novel. Weigel's "plot outline" is interesting in this connection -- chiefly for an error and an omission.

Christopher Marlowe, a gentle schoolmaster, is fleeing from the English death which is later described in Durrell's The Black Book; and his flight is conventionally motivated and traditionally told. Marlowe, en route to Greece, is diverted by the Greek Revolution. He makes contact with a mysterious boatman -- with small, Pan-like feet -- from whom Marlowe buys passage to the island. There he meets the other "guests" of Rumonades, a forlorn and eccentric millionaire, who lives alone in the big house he built for his lovely wife, Manuela. Manuela has deserted him. Marlowe meets Gordon, Walsh, Francis, and Dr. Fonvisin -- also Rumonades and several natives, including a woman who cooks and cleans for him, a local-color policeman, and a couple of dirty but devout monks.³⁸

The mis-spelling of 'Rumanades' is a minor fault. The omission lies in Weigel's not drawing his reader's

attention to the fact that the 'mysterious boatman -- with small, Pan-like feet' bears the name 'Christ': a rather incongruous name, considering his feet. The error is in relation to Marlowe, whose first name is not 'Christopher', but 'Christian'.

His surname is easily explained: Durrell had long been interested in the Elizabethans, as a letter dated Fall 1936 shows.³⁹ A letter to this writer from Alan G. Thomas corroborates this fact.

At that time (winter 1934-35), Pied Piper having been submitted to Cassell's, Durrell had no large-scale work on hand and spent a great deal of his time reading about Elizabethans.⁴⁰

Thomas's letter was in reply to an inquiry about an unpublished play by Durrell, and his recollection of that play ties Durrell's reading in the period just before the writing of Panic Spring to Christopher Marlowe.

It was a straight-forward, naturalistic play based on the assumption that Christopher Marlowe was a spy in the pay of Walsingham, much influenced by Hotson's 'The Death of Marlowe' published by the Nonesuch Press.⁴¹

It was natural, then, that Durrell should use 'Marlowe' as a surname for one of his characters in Panic Spring, having just written a play about Christopher Marlowe.

The change of 'Christopher' to 'Christian' which Weigel has missed is important in the consideration of the character's function in the novel. The name 'Christian', of course, immediately brings to mind John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, and leads the reader to suspect that, in some way, Durrell's Christian Marlowe is an allegorical figure. As such, he must then be an exemplary figure: but exemplary of what? The course of the novel makes this clear. As we have seen, Marlowe has left England in order to write a book on Quietism, attempting to put Molinos' 17th Century doctrines in a modern perspective. Quietism, for Gordon, who has seen the titles in Marlowe's collection, is 'metaphysical pinpricking',⁴² but Chapter VI begins with Marlowe working away on his 'Quietism Rediscovered'. Gordon, in fact, becomes 'almost a resident critic',⁴³ where Marlowe's work is concerned. One particular exchange between the two men is enlightening. "You're hopeless," [Gordon] said on one occasion. "You're the lineal descendant of the medieval parvipontani. You want to split hairs.

"The whole of your contemplative scheme seems to be built up on a sort of spiritual asceticism: mental celibacy."

"Rubbish [said Marlowe]. I don't deny life -- immediate life: sensation, or whatever you

like to call it. I merely use it as a foundation for contemplation. You merely accept the impact of things, sensual, intuitive, physical things, for what they are. What I want to do is to relate it all to thought. To fit it into a scheme."

"You mean that you want to reach thought through the direct appetites."

"Exactly."

"That to me," said Gordon, "is a sort of idiocy. Life is too great in itself to be chopped up for spiritual firewood."⁴⁴

Part of what Marlowe has to say in defense of his 'contemplative scheme' is almost a paraphrasing of Gordon's own words to Walsh in Pied Piper regarding Ruth's heraldic motto, 'No Shame'. 'She was full of a theory,' Gordon says,

about direct sensory impacts,
hampered as little as possible
by current shibboleths . . . a
theory neither of us really
bothered to work out . . .⁴⁵
subordination to instinct."

Ruth's 'direct sensory impacts' are analogous to Marlowe's "You merely accept the impact of things, sensual, intuitive, physical things, for what they are". There is, however, one major difference. Marlowe wishes to "relate it all to thought. To fit it into a scheme". This is something which Ruth never wanted to do and, further, is in direct contravention to Walsh's own

interpretation of the message in Pied Piper: 'he seemed to discover . . . that the triumph of the body was somehow desired, as a victory over a crawling and imperfect mind'.⁴⁶ The fact that Marlowe virtually gives up writing, gives up 'relating' the impact of physical things to thought, and gives himself over to simply experiencing them, is significant.

Marlowe's subsequent efforts to complete the essay on the New Quietism were a sufficient if tardy answer to the question. So far from things being a help, they were a positive hindrance. It was impossible to construct the ordered and logical framework of his scheme, when a half turn of his head could show him the flawless gift of landscape; the boats rowing across his window like heavy birds . . . ; the peasants in their vivid costumes. Yes, it was impossible. The pen became a useless, intractable instrument, the papers began to swarm with drawings and tentative misquotations, while his mind itself became blunt and animal, unable to escape the sheer drugs of flesh-comfort.⁴⁷

He has reached the 'subordination to instinct' which Ruth advocated to Gordon, and of which Gordon, throughout Panic Spring, is the chief exponent. Marlowe has ceased making 'spiritual firewood' out of life, and has become content merely with his own existence.

Had Marlowe, having reached the awareness of

existence, not ventured further, then it would be possible to affirm that Durrell does, indeed, intend Quietism as a viable philosophy in Panic Spring. Marlowe's contentedness with his own existence is no different, really, from that of the other characters in the novel. In his letters to Miller, Durrell stresses that his 'heraldic universe' is, because of the stress on the concrete and the spatial, necessarily memoryless and, by design, timeless. The point of awareness which Marlowe reaches has these same qualities.

And so Marlowe played away his time with calculated deceit. If time had ceased to exist, then there could be no measure put against his playing; indeed, to complete the circle of paradox, there was no future when the present was so full: of the fruits ripening, of the peasants singing rich and melodious with plenty, of children being born, men dying. No, there was no future, as there was no past.⁴⁸

The characters in the novel exist in relation to one another and to the landscape. Those passages which can be characterized as "memory" are for the greater part of the book given separate chapters. Thus: Chapter I: "Marlowe"; Chapter III: "Rumanades"; Chapter VII: "Walsh"; Chapter VIII: "The Mummy", which is the closest the novel comes to a character portrait of

Fonvisin; and Chapter IX: "Francis". By the end of Chapter IX we are more than two-thirds of the way through the novel, and five of the nine chapters have been devoted to the past of the main characters in the book. Of the other four chapters, three (II, IV and V) are concerned with the island, and one (Chapter VI: "The Portentous Pattern") with Marlowe's 'metaphysical pinpricking'. As Durrell admitted to Miller, even in the 'heraldic universe' 'one must make allowances for storing, parturition, experience and all that, involving time'.⁴⁹ These are precisely the data which each character carries with him as a part of his individual self; even though each has entered a timeless world, he has come from a world in which time obtains in its linear, diurnal form. So Durrell has provided for 'storing' and 'experience', those things which involve 'memory' and the past, and for the metaphorical 'parturition' of Marlowe's writing, in the chapters cited above. The remainder of the novel is concerned only with the recurrent present of experience in the Märchenwelt of Mavrodaphne.

Without consciously practising the regimen of Molinos regarding 'absolute calm unmixed with self ambition', Marlowe has reached precisely that stage.

Chapter X: "The Music" brings all the characters together for the playing of a recording of Beethoven's Fourth piano concerto. Their individual reactions to the music, played out-of-doors, holds with their reactions to the landscape.

This time there was no escaping the remorseless hold of the music. The great trumpet of the machine brimmed with the noise and poured it out among them. It seemed to Gordon, then, that everything between the poles must be caught up and partially suffocated by the pressure of it. Everything, yes, everything knew this moment as an equivalent of infinity, timeless, indestructible.

Surely, Gordon was thinking, the impact of this emotion is not confined to a locality? The concussion of it must be a part of the emotion of every living thing.

The music still poured over them, as if from a gash in the world's side; the flux was in him too, now, so that he felt his own life-force draining, pouring, for ever pouring in a passion of tenderness and exultation across the warm darkness of that early summer night.⁵⁰

The feeling of being caught up in the music, of becoming one with it, is true of them all. It is in Gordon's reaction that Durrell expresses the further feeling that being caught up in the music is also being caught up in

the forces of the universe, of experiencing '[that] moment as an equivalent of infinity, timeless, indestructible'. Through the experience of the direct, sensory impact of the music, they have all become one with the physical world around them.

The process which Marlowe has unconsciously undergone on Mavrodaphne was summed up by Durrell in the later "Cities, Plains and People" (1946).

Truth within the tribal wells,
Innocent inviting creature
Does not rise to human spells
But by paradox

Teaches all who seek for her
That no saint or seer unlocks
The wells of truth unless he first
Conquer for the truth his thirst.⁵¹

Marlowe has reached "a state of grace" in a sense which is different from that advocated by Christian theologians such as Aquinas.

Between the years 1256 and 1259 Aquinas held about 250 discussion classes, all on the subject of truth. Each class lasted two days. The questions discussed belong to a world of discourse which simply has no common frontier with ours. They are such questions as 'Is God's knowledge the cause of all things?' 'Is the Book of Life the same as predestination?' 'Do angels know the future?'⁵²

The Summa Totius Theologiae of Aquinas and the proposed Quietism Rediscovered of Christian Marlowe share one important element: the application of logic to both the spiritual and physical worlds. Logic, the 'sterile apparatus' of 'black-hearted Descartes',⁵³ has no place in the world of Mavrodaphne, as Gordon points out to Marlowe.⁵⁴ The congruity of ideas implicit in the exercise of logic does not obtain in the Märchenwelt of the island.

"Dash it, Marlowe, ["Gordon says,]"we might do anything here and it would be congruous. It would fit. I could cut you into pieces and boil you down for boot-blackening without any trace of incongruous behaviour."⁵⁵

Marlowe, however, returns to his writing, and in the sense that he has returned to the world of the mind, he has "fallen" from the "state of grace" which he has achieved in terms of the physical world. This concept is paralleled in an opposite way in The Black Book when Durrell, writing about England from Corfu, refers to himself as 'Lawrence Lucifer'.⁵⁶ The Luciferian state into which Durrell had fallen, in his own mind, was the result of his rejection of the social, religious and philosophical modes of England, presented in fictional form through the character of Walsh Clifton in Pied Piper

of Lovers. The assertion of individuality and of the body in that novel were, as we have seen, metaphorically parallel to the Biblical assertions of Lucifer. Durrell's "fall" from the "state of grace" which being an Englishman implied is thus reversed by Marlowe when, late in the novel, he decides to return to a teaching post in England and, almost as if in consequence, begins to write another chapter of 'Quietism Rediscovered'.⁵⁷ As if to make the point of Marlowe's change clear, the following passage is placed immediately after the description of Marlowe's rediscovered creative energy.

By six o'clock that evening the rain had decreased to a drizzle, and the sea was less violent in its hauling and flinging of seaweed mats across the bay and the headland. The landscape emerged from the mist, still lachrymose and feeble by reason of the clouds which hung above Leucothea and the deep valleys surrounding it on three sides. But Marlowe was so deep in the discovery of his own powers of exposition that he did not glance up; or, if he did, glanced outside the window with such abstraction, that he failed to notice these cheering items of weather.⁵⁸

Marlowe does, indeed, assume an allegorical function in Panic Spring. His is the figure which exemplifies Quietism, ironically, in two of its major but antithetical

points: the first, its doctrine of contemplation and 'absolute calm unmixed with self ambition' -- this is the positive side of Marlowe which we see when he gives up writing and succumbs to 'the spirit of place'; the second, its 'metaphysical pinpricking', the application of a foreign logic to the natural world -- this is the negative side, seen in the opposition of the writing of 'Quietism Rediscovered' to the "state of grace" which Marlowe has already achieved. Quietism per se is not, then, a viable philosophy in terms of Panic Spring; its usefulness as a "system" is denied by the very actions of its exemplar in the book.

The obvious conclusion is that Durrell has "lifted" his material, as was suggested above, perhaps to act as a "straw man" which he could knock down in the course of the novel, perhaps because it held some similarities to his own view of life. This conclusion is supported by a passage from his 1949 essay on Henry Miller.

... I would like to emphasize that for the creative man the whole world of philosophic or religious ideas is simply a sort of harem from which he chooses now this pretty concubine, now that. We say that X is a Theosophist or a Bergsonian: but it would be very difficult to criticize his work entirely in terms of either proposition.

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The truth is that the artist is at his most amoral when he reaches the domain of ideas. He is concerned, of course, not with the dialectical truth of ideas, but simply with their beauty and appositeness to his own temperamental make-up.⁵⁹

If Marlowe is an allegorical figure embodying the "straw man" of Quietism in Panic Spring, what of the other characters? For the most part, as we have seen, they are all given separate chapters of their own, chapters in which their backgrounds are laid before the reader so as to give a rationale for their behaviour and for their individual reactions to the island, to the "Greek ambience" with which Durrell is so much concerned. Generally speaking, their individual backgrounds provide the reader with proof of the wide diversity of personalities which can find unity in a situation such as the one which obtains on Mavrodaphne.

Rumanades is one example. Aside from his function in the novel, he also foreshadows Nessim of The Alexandria Quartet and Julian of Tunc and Nunquam, in that he is the representative of the world of "big business". Like Nessim and Julian, too, he is the unfortunate victim of the loss of a beautiful woman. Rumanades, much before the time of the novel, has lost Manuela, the Spanish woman whom he had literally purchased to be his wife.

Nessim marries Justine, again before their novel begins, for politico-economic reasons; Julian, on the other hand, never marries Iolanthe, before or during Tunc or Nunquam, but he does effectively purchase her by buying up a controlling interest in her theatrical production company. The similarities between the three men, each of whom might be said to represent the "cash nexus" at three different periods in Durrell's writing, are of major significance. The one difference between Rumanades and his successors, however, is even more important to the development of Durrell's views.

Like similar chapters in Panic Spring devoted to one particular character, Chapter III: "Rumanades" provides a short synoptical history of the man who owns the island on which the action takes place and who, in sometimes most particular ways, is the benefactor of all his 'guests'. We are given his approximate date of birth, the trade and attitudes of his father, some little information about his mother -- but, primarily, we are given the meteoric rise of Kostas Rumanades as a man of exceptional business acumen. As the first paragraph points out,

Kostas Rumanades, if he had not
made history himself, was the
kind of man with whose help

history is made; and since history, they say, is no longer a question of conquest, but merely of what political science calls "economic penetration", it is as an economist that he takes his place in the history of Greece.⁶⁰

Other facts which are more relevant to the immediate action of the novel are also provided in this chapter: the purchase of the island; his marriage to Manuela, and her final desertion; the arrival of Francis and Fonvisin, of Gordon, and later of Walsh, 'that strange waif . . . -- enigmatic, but given to uproarious fits of flippancy and horseplay, nursing a private dejection of which only Gordon knew';⁶¹ Rumanades' "persuasion" of the village priest that 'The Ritual of the Fireworks' should have religious blessing; and his intense devotion to the collecting and cataloguing of the folk-legends of the island.

It is this fascination with legend that is the key to the difference between Rumanades, on the one hand, and Nessim and Julian on the other. Through it, Rumanades is only one step removed from the Märchenwelt of the island.

Like a child, too, he was avid for fairy-stories. Locked in a bureau, somewhere in the Villa Pothetos, was a card-index file, which contained

the results of several years' arduous research into the origin of the local legends, together with a large amount of personally collected evidence written in his sprawling hand.⁶²

This avocation goes unexplained in the novel, but, judging from his excitement at each new occurrence related to him by the peasants, we are led to believe that Rumanades is goaded on in his research less by the spirit of anthropological inquiry than by a desire to find some definite proof that the old pagan gods still inhabit the island and play a part in its life. Marlowe's own experience of "the elder gods" bears this out.

As he stood, panting, at the foot of the cliff, on the soft carpet of seaweed, and peered about him for direction, he heard the voice of Fonvisin near at hand in the darkness, raised in a small owlish hoot of laughter. Unnameable things seemed to spring up in the darkness at the sound of it; the ghosts of an antique world -- satyrs with insolent mouths, and sirens, the archaic gods -- those things which in sunlight are no more than savage fables of a lovelier world, became, in the tunnels of gloom behind him, plausible realities, instinct with life.⁴³

In the hobby of Rumanades and the experience of Marlowe the title of the novel is made clear. It is the

'Panic' essence of the landscape which binds all the characters, however disparate their backgrounds and personalities, in a kind of unity which they intuit rather than "know". Marlowe exhibits no fear of 'the archaic gods': in the context of the scene, their existence is accepted unquestioningly. It has been suggested that Durrell owes a great deal to D. H. Lawrence, and the best explanation of the simultaneous existence of Pan and Christ is to be found in Lawrence's "The Overtone", a story which obviously pre-dates Panic Spring in composition, but antedates it in publication.

"And Pan is in the darkness, and
Christ in the pale light.

"And night shall never be day,
and day shall never be night.

"But side by side they shall go,
day and night, night and day, for
ever apart, for ever together.

"Pan and Christ, Christ and Pan.

"Both moving over me, so when in
the sunshine I go in my robes among
my neighbours, I am a Christian.
But when I run robeless through the
dark-scented woods alone, I am Pan's
nymph.

"Now I must go, for I want to
run away. Not run away from myself,
but to myself."⁶⁴

Elsa Laskell's explanation of the simultaneity of Pan and Christ, her denial of the old legend that, at the birth of Christ, a cry went through the ancient world, "Pan is dead", serves as an explanation for the

reaction -- or lack of reaction -- of the character so aptly named Christian Marlowe by Durrell. The harmonious existence of Pan and Christ symbolizes for Durrell the union of soul and body, of the spiritual and the sensual. And, too, the girl's comment in Lawrence's story, '"Not run away from myself, but to myself"', is a parallel with the feelings of Walsh Clifton in Pied Piper of Lovers. The 'archaic gods' in whatever guise -- Pan, Bacchus, Dionysus --, were at the same time a reality (as they are for Marlowe) and a symbol of man's symbiotic relationship with the earth. On the island of Mavrodaphne, just as in the India of Pied Piper, there is room neither for the mind-oriented dualism of Descartes nor for an attitude which stresses only the body. There is room only for the harmony which the simultaneous existence of Christ and Pan denotes.

What is true of Rumanades is in some part true of all the major characters in the novel. It is tempting, but probably fruitless, to see a parallel in the names 'Rumanades' and 'Rhadamanthys'; too easy, perhaps, to see the old Greek financier, reformed on his island, as the figure whom Durrell chose to be the judge of the "dead". Yet, in a way, this is his role: to pass judgement upon and accept certain 'guests' from the

outside world into his own private Elysian Field.

... it had seemed a pity that so few people ever got a chance of seeing the natural beauties of the island: for the laws of privacy sternly forbade the casual entry of foreigners. It seemed a pity to keep this pleasure to himself. So Christ was given permission to bring back with him anyone sufficiently interesting and interested, when he returned from his weekly trip to Brindisi.⁶⁵

Each of these 'guests' is in some way a victim of a disease akin to 'the English Death': 'that nameless dithering old Frenchman, an entomologist . . . [who] talked endlessly about an injustice done him by the University of Padua';⁶⁶ Francis, the victim of the world of commercial art; 'Fonvisin, a sluggish, heavily built Russian doctor whose politics had not found favour with the Bolsheviks';⁶⁷ Gordon and Walsh, about whom we know a great deal from Pied Piper of Lovers; and, finally, Marlowe.

If there are any "constants" in the novel they are Walsh and Gordon. Seen either in the light of Pied Piper of Lovers as it informs Panic Spring, or simply in terms of the latter novel, the characters of the brothers-in-law are immutable relative to the vacillation of, for example, Francis. As in Pied Piper, Gordon functions as the proponent of the symbiotic relationship

with landscape which Walsh finally realizes in that novel. This is his relationship with Marlowe and Marlowe's 'Quietism Rediscovered' -- in effect, Gordon is "satanic" in the original sense of the word: he is 'merely an opponent'.⁶⁸ Walsh, on the other hand, is the living exemplar of Gordon's theories. Neither he nor his function have changed since the closing pages of Pied Piper. In Panic Spring, he is the figure, more than any other, against whom we place Marlowe. Walsh has left England, to all intents and purposes never to return to 'Pudding Island'. Marlowe, too, has left England, but the novel chronicles his regression and final acceptance of 'the English Death' which Walsh has escaped.

The ultimate difficulty with relating each of these characters to the others is that they are all, to some degree, facets of Durrell. The figure of Marlowe, for example, is Panic Spring's equivalent of the Walsh Clifton of Pied Piper. Marlowe, on one level, is simply an older Durrell, carrying with him a greater degree of acculturation than Walsh Clifton does in his novel. For the purposes of the second novel, Durrell was able to shed the biographical "mask" of Walsh Clifton and gain a degree of objectivity with Marlowe which was virtually

impossible before. The presence of Clifton in Panic Spring, however, assures Durrell's being able to draw back from Marlowe when the latter decides to recommit himself to England. The structure of the novel bears this out: after Marlowe's decision, the emphasis shifts to Clifton. Gordon, carrying his function over from Pied Piper, is as much a "straw man" as Marlowe, with the important difference that his are the theories which Durrell himself supports. His relationship with Clifton in the first novel and Marlowe in the second, however, is the same. He is the intended antagonist, in both novels, of the point of view that Durrell wishes to question and, finally, deny. From one standpoint, then, the tension which Durrell creates between these three characters is the personification of a tension within himself, and, far more than in Pied Piper, the novel is an examination of that tension with a possible solution at the end.

While not the final chapter, Chapter XII: "Atque Vale" is certainly the climax of the novel. It contains Francis's preparations for departure from Mavrodaphne; Marlowe's resumption of his writing; and the death of Rumanades. These are the major points, and there are some seemingly minor points which foreshadow later

developments in Durrell's novels.⁶⁹ The key to this chapter lies in the opening line of Marlowe's letter to Latimer, his headmaster:

"A line from my nowhere to that
depressing somewhere you inhabit,
viz. England"70

Marlowe has become disenchanted with the island and its effect on him. The reasons for this disenchantment are not spelled out, but they have lead to melancholy.

Latimer, so far away, vividly busy
among his own business, could hardly
grasp the essentials of his
melancholy. But then Latimer
had not sat as he had at this
window, staring out across the
lagoon through the rhythm of
cypress-motion, at the plunge of
swifts over the blue water.⁷¹

In the face of what we have seen as a necessary symbiotic relationship with the earth, Marlowe's reasons for melancholia seem strange. How can the landscape, an intimate association with which is considered propitiatory in Pied Piper and elsewhere in this novel, have this effect on Marlowe? The answer lies in Marlowe, not in the landscape, and it is applicable as well to Francis's decision to leave and to the death of Rumanades.

For reasons that will be discussed later in this section, disenchantment with place is the result of the inability to accept that which one has no means of

controlling. This is made clearest in Marlowe's situation with his book: he cannot write a book entitled 'Quietism Rediscovered', for he has never discovered "quietism" himself; consequently, he can (and does) deal only with the theory imposed on the reality, with what Gordon calls 'metaphysical pinpricking'. Francis is in approximately the same situation as Marlowe. She has been living on a retaining fee from a textile manufacturer in England, and her retainer has been discontinued. Because the acculturation imposed by 'the English Death' requires that one hold a job in order to live, she must find work, and this necessitates leaving the island -- even though she might have stayed on through the beneficence of Rumanades and the commission which he had given her to paint a frescoe in the church. Gordon has pointed out earlier in the novel that, on Mavrodaphne, nothing is incongruous. Congruity, in fact, occurs -- it is not made to happen. Thus, Marlowe's 'portentous pattern' cannot and will not form to his specifications; the "pattern" of Francis's life, built on her involvement with commercial art, is shattered when her retainer is withdrawn: something which she cannot control; and Rumanades, ironically, having once given up the "patterned" existence of the world of big business, now dies because the fortuitous pattern which had formed on the island

with the advent of his 'guests' was about to be broken. Ironically because he, like them, had given up the European way of life for a kind of "death" state on Mavrodaphne, for a giving over to sheer existence and the fortuitous patterns which form therein.

Christ had brought 'guests' to his island and, for the most part, Rumanades had accepted them. They had all come, like Marlowe, with a past which remained undefined and with a future which was of no concern. The breaking in of the "other world" which Europe had become for them was the stroke which killed Rumanades. This is easily understood, for it is the product of a definition by opposites: if (like Marlowe and the rest) we consider Europe and its culture as "life", then the "other world" of Mavrodaphne is "death"; acceptance of that "other world", however, causes a gradual shift in emphasis until finally it becomes "life" and the European world "death". Thus, for Rumanades at least, the intrusion of Europe after so long a time meant death. Some of Rumanades' thoughts on death in this chapter might, in fact, be taken as a definition of what the island has come to mean for his 'guests'. For example:

Sitting there, in all simplicity
of mind, he contemplated his own

death as something new and delightful; a divorce from the present which was perplexing, always perplexing, with its trivialities. Death, once beyond that partition of physical pain and fear, seemed to him made in the shape of his own desire. It would be a place of infinite understanding, in which there would be no bars for the roving intuition; everything would be open, and explored. Death must be a very spacious place . . . in which so many heroes can be accomodated, so many mysteries solved.⁷²

The rapidity with which the novel closes is indicated by the titles of the final three chapters:

"World Without End", "Atque Vale", and "The Curtain".

The timeless aspect of the novel is indicated by

Marlowe's actions in these three chapters. In Chapter XI: "World Without End" he ceases to work on 'Quietism Rediscovered'; in Chapter XII: "Atque Vale" he picks

up the work again and is once more caught up in the enthusiasm with which he began it; and, in Chapter XIII:

"The Curtain" he is ready to return to England. These are short chapters, and much is crowded into them which, in another, more linear scheme, would have been developed at length. There is no need for such development here, for, as in the chapters devoted to individual characters, action in Panic Spring is delineated in statements. The

opening lines of "The Curtain" are an example.

Vague and evanescent their plans had been, and this simple one-act death on the part of the old man would force them to reconsider their chances. They were all at once a dispossessed court, left without a succession to save them. To Francis it mattered least: she had been going away in any case. Death she could not try to understand. Being told of death so near, she had gone frozen and mute inside herself, avoiding everyone except Walsh. To Gordon death had not very much force. He spent the day at the Villa Pothetos with Fonvisin, interviewing the hordes of peasants who came from the distant villages to make a gift to the dead man and weep at his feet.

But Marlowe, curiously enough, spent the day working as he had never worked in his life. He had slept late into the morning, been woken with the news of Rumanades' death, and after breakfast . . . had sat himself down to his work of self-expression.⁷³

Thus it is that we are totally prepared for what is to come as a secondary climax to the novel.

Generally speaking, the reader is shown very little of Walsh Clifton in those parts of the novel which take place on Mavrodaphne. Most of his character is resumed in the chapter which is devoted to his past with Ruth. With "The Curtain", however, there is a shift of emphasis

from Marlowe to Walsh, indicated in the statement that Francis avoided 'everyone except Walsh'. The developing Walsh-Francis relationship contains the final expression of Durrell's viewpoint as it is put forward in Panic Spring. Going to pay their last respects to Rumanades,

they walked up the aisle [of the church] together, hand in hand, for she had never seen death, and he still feared that motionless passivity which visits the human body when it dies.⁷⁴

The slight element of the wedding procession with which the sombre funeral scene is endowed foreshadows what is to follow between Walsh and Francis in the church. They look down on Rumanades, lying in his coffin.

Then Walsh said: "Why are we all so dead? Why do we live so exclusively in the past and the future?"

He was in a rage with the girl for not flinging down every obstacle to grasp the delight within reach. Couldn't she see that nothing but immediate necessity mattered, not the codes, the complexes, the revulsions. Why didn't she accept. "We're all dead," he said again with contempt. "We're the last of the romantics, between two worlds. Our emotions aren't our own any longer. We're shirkers."⁷⁵

The rejection of acculturation, of the societal patterns imposed on the individual from without, is the essence

of Walsh's thinking in this passage. 'The codes, the complexes, the revulsions' no longer matter for Walsh, and this is the point he is attempting to make to Francis. This definition of "death" is the precursor of the definition of 'the English Death' in The Black Book, and Walsh's comments in the final chapter of Panic Spring are a preview of the material with which Durrell's third novel deals.

In reply to Walsh's remarks, Francis gives what is essentially a description of their functions as characters in the novel. "'We are wise enough now,'" Walsh says, "'to break through our environment and conditioning. We need something new from life -- life in the body, not the mind.'"⁷⁶

"That's what Fonvisin was always saying [," Francis replies]. He said I was a cardboard silhouette of a stock emotion. And you, and everyone. Gordon was the only one, he said, who took things as they came."⁷⁷

As we have seen, it is through the juxtaposition of these 'cardboard silhouette[s] of stock emotion[s]' that Durrell has explored his themes in Panic Spring. Walsh, as the exemplar of Durrell's viewpoint, is given the final statement in the novel. He has agreed

with Fonvisin's view of them all as 'cardboard silhouette[s]' and, in reply to Francis's impatient questioning of his views on 'environment and conditioning', he says,

"Oh! for God's sake let's be true to our immediate necessities, to our wants. Why complicate them and make tragi-comedy out of them?"
 "Words," she said in bewilderment.
 "Words, Walsh."
 "I know."
 "What do they all mean?"
 "Simply that we're fools to deny life. It's to be or not to be all over again."⁷⁸

In some way, then, each of the characters in Panic Spring has adopted a "mask" with which to face reality -- except, of course, for Gordon, 'who was the only one who took things as they came'. They have each appeared in silhouette but, in the end, have had to encounter the reality of their individual situations "full-face", as it were. Marlowe must return to the strictures of the 'dead tradition',⁷⁹ of England. Walsh, of whom we see so little in the novel, restates the position which he had reached at the end of Pied Piper of Lovers. And Francis follows Walsh.

With a little sigh, as if the tangle was at last resolving itself for her, she turned to him, and said:
 "All right, then; I don't understand, but I'll believe you."⁸⁰

At the end of Panic Spring, Walsh Clifton remains the advocate of 'something new from life -- life in the body, not the mind'. Durrell's second novel closes in the manner of his first.

* *

Panic Spring points to both Cefalû (The Dark Labyrinth) and The Alexandria Quartet. The omnipresence of the 'archaic gods' on Mavrodaphne foreshadows in many respects the more formal symbolic use Durrell makes of mythological figures in Cefalû, while the construction of Panic Spring in a spatial rather than a linear mode is similar to the technique of The Alexandria Quartet.

The first three parts [Justine,
Balthazar, Mountolive] . . . are
to be deployed spatially . . . and
are not linked in a serial form.
They interlap, interweave, in a
purely spatial relation. Time is
stayed.⁸¹

The interlapping and interweaving of objects and people is as much the key to the worlds of Mavrodaphne and Alexandria as it is to the timeless world of Dunsany's Elfland.

The rejection of the abstract concept of linear time in favour of the concrete world of "existential" time is indicative of the overall pattern of being explored in Panic Spring. Symbolised in the withdrawal

of most of the characters from the time-obsessed world of Europe, the alternate mode of existence presented in the novel is the first real exploration of 'the heraldic universe' in Durrell's work. The new universe which Durrell told Miller he was creating 'quite alone' required 'a new attitude. An attitude without memory.' Five chapters of the novel are therefore utilised as "memory chapters" which allow the author to devote the remainder of his work to an examination of the developing relationship between the characters without the necessity of their constant referral to the past, the reader already having been provided with the 'storing, parturition, experience and all that, involving time', without which each character would be only 'a cardboard silhouette of a stock emotion'.

Earlier, we discussed Quietism as a viable philosophy in Panic Spring, and found it lacking due to the particular treatment it receives at the hands of Christian Marlowe. This does not mean that the basic tenets of Molinos' theory are unacceptable in the 'heraldic universe' of which Mavrodaphne is a microcosm. In fact, existence in the 'heraldic universe', as it is manifested through the lives of the characters in the novel, may be succinctly resumed in the phrase, 'absolute

calm unmixed with self ambition'. This is the stage which Walsh Clifton has reached on the island -- total rejection of both past and future, and acceptance of the present as the only viable medium for living.

However, to state unequivocally that the life-style advocated in Panic Spring by Walsh and Gordon is Quietist would be to consciously commit the error against which Durrell warns in his essay on Miller.

We say that X is a Theosophist or a Bergsonian: but it would be very difficult to criticize his work entirely in terms of either proposition.⁸²

Durrell's view of the position of "the maker" in his new universe -- the curiously God-like position which he propounds to Miller -- owes a great deal to Wyndham Lewis, as does the total acceptance of the concrete natural world and the rejection of the abstract one which Marlowe attempts to construct upon it. Here there is also a link with De Gourmont's view of the natural world outlined in the earlier discussion of Pied Piper of Lovers. Gordon's statement to Marlowe on the congruity of things and events on Mavrodaphne is another expression of De Gourmont's views on the "natural" and "unnatural". Thus:

"Dash it Marlowe, we might do anything here and it would be congruous.

It would fit. I could cut you into pieces and boil you down for boot-blackening without any trace of incongruous behaviour."83

It is very difficult, especially when dealing with man, to distinguish between normal and abnormal. What is the normal; what the natural? Nature ignores this adjective84

For the twentieth century, De Gourmont's view itself is perhaps "unnatural". At the very least it is primitive, set against the social, economic and theological constructs upon which the inter-relationship of human beings is based in this century. Just as primitive, in this context, is Marlowe's easy acceptance of the presence of the 'archaic gods', symbols of the natural world which were presumed to have disappeared with the advent of the more spiritually-oriented mode embodied in Christ. Gordon's view on the congruity of things on Mavrodaphne does not, however, explain Marlowe's attitude. The incident on the beach, in which Marlowe feels the presence of the old gods of the island, takes place while his identification with Durrell is still valid. Marlowe's attitude, then, is Durrell's -- an attitude which he later epitomized in the term "deus loci". The old gods are as real on Mavrodaphne as Marlowe's theoretical constructs are unreal. Gordon's remark on Marlowe's theory, because it is the kind of remark

Durrell himself would make, is worth recalling at this point. Having determined that Marlowe wishes 'to reach thought through the direct appetites', Gordon replies,

"That to me . . . is a sort of idiocy.
Life is too great in itself to be
chopped up for spiritual firewood."⁸⁵

The movement to Mavrodaphne from Europe is a transportation to the Island of the Blessed in the Pindaric sense, and the view of existence which the guests of Rumanades hold is certainly one which 'stresses the leisure and the aesthetic view of life free from everyday cares and labour'⁸⁶ The timeless world of the insulae fortunatae, the world in which the present is recurrent in the sense of eternal, is the abode of the old gods because it is tied to the landscape, rather than to the events of "historical" time. The landscape is the prime character, in one sense, in all of Durrell's work, simply because Durrell views it as a kind of palimpsest which, although it records the passage of man, remains eternal. The deus loci is therefore not synonymous with the Zeitgeist. They are, in fact, dialectal opposites, the one the product of a view of time as volumetric, the other of time as linear.

12.9.37

Confused by our clumsy gestures of interpretation, history is never kind to those who expect anything of her. Under the formal pageant of events which we have dignified by our interest, the land changes very little, and the structure of the basic self of man hardly at all. In this landscape observed objects still retain a kind of mythological form -- so that though chronologically we are separated from Ulysses by hundreds of years in time, yet we dwell in his shadow.⁸⁷

In an interview with Kenneth Young, Durrell stated that 'Panic Spring (1937) was a brain-construct, not a gift.'⁸⁸ Whether or not we agree totally with an author's view of his own work, his comments are always of value to the critic, and especially so in this case. So we shall allow Durrell the final say in this discussion of his second novel, Panic Spring.

Corfu Greece [1936]

Dear Alan,

Sorry I haven't written for some time but I've been busy getting this novel off my chest. Soon you'll have the last batch of paper. What horrid fruity stuff. The discussion on Walsh, however, is a good bit of work -- different to the rest.

I think Music in Limbo is a better title. Short and quite as expressive.⁸⁹ The book means nothing. I've tried -- just for an exercise in writing to create characters on two continuous planes of life -- the present -- meaning the island and their various pasts. It does not progress as an

ordinary novel progresses. The
tentacles push out sideways while
the main body is almost static.
Whether I've managed to create
the two planes successfully, or
whether the total result is
interesting I can't tell. But
I do know that there's some
interesting writing in it. I am
beginning to feel that my pencil
is almost sharpened. Soon I'll
be ready to begin on a BOOK.⁹⁰

That 'BOOK' was The Black Book (1938), the final volume
of Durrell's early trilogy.

CHAPTER THREE
"A PRIVATE COUNTRY"

For the first time in his writing, Durrell attempts in The Black Book a comprehensive linking of themes with form in the creation of an organic whole. While the structure of the novel is tight, we will attempt in this chapter to isolate and discuss the major themes which we have seen developing in Pied Piper of Lovers and Panic Spring. To reiterate, those themes are: the concept of time; 'the heraldic universe' which Durrell is attempting to attain; and the relationship of man with the natural world. While the last might well be said to be the controlling theme in the novel, we will approach each of the themes individually, and then show how they are inter-related in the world-view which Durrell presents. But because of the novel's formal importance, we will begin with a brief discussion of its structure.

Structurally, The Black Book is less like Pied Piper than it is like Panic Spring. There is a narrative progression in the third novel which parallels that of one and two taken together: that is, it involves the reasons for the movement away from England by the narrator-protagonist and the exile itself. But the structural mode is spatial rather than linear, which gives the novel certain affinities with Panic Spring.

Nonetheless, the structure of three is unique in the early trilogy, and may be seen as the product of a logical progression from the chronologically linear biography of Pied Piper through the use of "memory chapters" in Panic Spring to annihilate linear time. As in two, linear time is rejected in favour of volumetric time, but with more far-reaching results. The time of The Black Book is 'the time of poem', a concept deriving from Durrell's theory of 'the heraldic universe' which will be discussed later in this chapter.

In some respects, the structure of The Black Book foreshadows that of the later Alexandria Quartet. Setting aside for the moment the concepts of Relativity as they relate to the structure of the later novel, we may say that parts one through three of the Quartet consist of three quite distinct views of the same action, and that the effect of those three parts lies in the juxtaposing of those views. A similar although more primitive device is used in The Black Book, in which the views of various characters are set against one another in order to provide the reader with a variety of responses to the same or similar occurrences. For example, Herbert 'Death' Gregory serves as an alter ego

for 'Lawrence Lucifer' Durrell in The Black Book. His diary, also referred to as 'the black book', is a commentary on his own life which forms a thematic parallel to those sections of the novel purportedly written by 'Lawrence Lucifer'. However, it also provides clues to the techniques which Durrell rejected as unsuitable for structuring this description of his 'spiritual adventure'. Toward the end of Book One, the diarist comments on the format which he himself is using.

One of the unfortunate things about a personal style, a personal journal, is that one assumes one's reader's knowledge of all the facts. A journal, then, if written for oneself, would be all but meaningless to the world; for one turns, not to the spadework, the narrative, but to the most interesting points in it. Look at me. I am in such a hurry to finish the job that I blurt out the end before the beginning. It is going through me at such a pace that I cannot distinguish the various flavors of incident, in their chronological order. (I am a liar. It is artifice which dictates this form to me.)¹

This short passage implies the rejection of the chronological narrative and the stream-of-consciousness or interior monologue techniques which were common to

the novel in the period in which Durrell wrote The Black Book. Durrell had explored the narrative mode in Pied Piper of Lovers and, judging by the altered format of Panic Spring, found it wanting. For the most part, the narrative style is an adaptation of the techniques of the drama. That is, it presents a "story" as the play does, but with the added benefits of interpolated authorial comment and a broader scope for the details of time, space and action. These benefits, however, are the very reasons why Gregory rejects the device. As he points out, the reader will turn, 'not to the spadework, the narrative', but to 'the most interesting points in it'. Further, the writer of narrative must implicitly 'assume [his] reader's knowledge of all the facts'.

In terms of the narrative technique, this assumption is fallacious, precisely because it is the prerogative of the novelist to select and include, reject and exclude, those items which either do or do not bear upon the story being presented to the reader. The same objection can be voiced for the use of the interior monologue device. On the one hand, the narrative technique aims at convincing the reader

that he is being given 'all the facts' in the order in which they occurred. On the other, the interior monologue technique asks the reader to believe that he is being presented with the whole spectrum of thoughts, sensations and emotions in the mind of at least one character. But in both cases the novelist's prerogative underlies the selection of material and the way in which it is presented. Both, then, are founded upon artifice. Both are illusions.

There is another reason for the rejection of the interior monologue technique in The Black Book. Like the narrative, it is an adaptation from the drama, for it is the prose equivalent of the soliloquy. Coupling the older dramatic device with the findings of Freud and others on the nature of the mind, the interior monologue presents a potentially infinite number of inter-related pieces of mental "data". The function of the soliloquy -- to present the audience with the "thoughts" of a character at an appropriate juncture in the development of the plot -- becomes the major function of the interior monologue. Time, space and physical action become tangential to the presentation of the mind of a character. In both the soliloquy and the interior

monologue, then, the individual is of paramount importance.

But in The Black Book, Durrell is concerned with the destruction of this stress on the individual, a concern which can be traced to his reading of Georg Walther Groddeck, a contemporary of Freud and the source for Freud's theory of the id. The importance of Groddeck for Durrell is clearly seen in the lengthy article which he wrote for the "Studies in Genius" series in Horizon magazine. We are concerned here with the influence of Groddeck on Durrell so, rather than describe Groddeck's theories at length, we shall quote salient passages from Durrell's article. It is in his views on the forces within the human organism, Durrell says, that 'Groddeck emerges as a natural philosopher, as incapable of separating body and mind as he is incapable of separating health and disease.'² 'For Freud, as indeed for the age and civilization of which he was both representative and part, the ego is supreme. But to Groddeck the ego appeared as a contemptible mask fathered on us by the intellect, which by imposing upon the human being, persuaded him that he was motivated by forces within the control of his conscious mind.'³ But there is a

force, according to Groddeck, which is within the human being but not subject to his control, and this force he calls the 'It'. 'Man, then, is himself a function of this mysterious force which expresses itself through him, through his illness no less than his health. To Groddeck the psycho-analytic equipment was merely a lens by which one might see a little more deeply than heretofore into the mystery of the human being -- as an It-self. Over [against] the theory of psycho-analysis, as he used it, therefore, stood the metaphysical principle which expressed itself through man's behaviour, through his size, shape, beliefs, wants.'⁴ Durrell's use of Groddeck's theories is at times analytical, at times metaphysical, and we shall have cause to refer to Groddeck many times in the course of our discussion. But in the context of our present subject, the structure of The Black Book, we must note the direct relevance of Groddeck's comments on the ego and modern literature to Durrell's rejection of the narrative and interior monologue techniques. Speaking of the artist, Groddeck says,

No man can be an artist for all time
 whose only concern is with the human
 soul, its passions, pains and
 aspirations, its tenderness or
 toughness in conflict or in friend-
 ship with other men. He remains

a soul-searcher, a psychologist, a character-painter, a man of the theatre, who tears out a part of the truth from the web and presents it to us as the whole.

This is the foundation on which modern literature has been established, perhaps even the whole of modern life. It is merely play-acting, to put it more kindly, mere psychologizing, character-drawing, and, appropriately enough, the supreme genius of modern literature, Shakespeare, was himself an actor.⁵

It is Durrell's desire in The Black Book to destroy the egocentricity both of twentieth century man and of modern literature. Following Groddeck, he must reject both the narrative and interior monologue as techniques for the structuring of his third novel.

There is a third technique which, considering the number of references to it in the novel, Durrell would seem to have chosen. His reference to 'the whole rabble of cinematic faces whose history is the black book',⁶ and the statement that he is 'no longer sure of the outlines of the real, so that men and women themselves take on a curious impermanence, mixing together like shapes and symbols in a cinema mix-up',⁷ could be said to indicate that the structure of The Black Book derives from the cinema. This is far from the case, but Durrell's rejection of the cinematic mode is more metaphysical than

structural, and we shall deal with the metaphysical import of the cinema later in this chapter.

The metaphor which does determine the structure of the novel is significantly appropriate to the age. Durrell was born two years before the start of World War One, had seen the civil skirmishing in Greece, and considered himself a part (however uninvolved) of the generation of artists which took an active role in the Spanish Civil War. The opening decades of the twentieth century had seen the spread of increasingly sophisticated weapons and their use, beginning with World War One, and it is the post-war generation which 'Lawrence Lucifer' laments in the novel.

I am weeping for my generation. I
am devising in my mind a legend to
convey the madness which created us
in crookedness, in dislocation, in
tort. We are a generation enwombed.⁸

'Lawrence Lucifer's' generation had been malformed in the womb by the explosive tenor of the times, and The Black Book takes place after the explosion. 'The epoch from which this chronicle is made flesh . . . is an explosion. My lovely people like so many fragments of an explosion already in flight'⁹ 'I have simply

gathered up the little pieces and offered them to you on a plate: it is for others to decide at what date the explosion took place.'¹⁰ Durrell chose explosion, then, as the motive force behind the structure of his third novel, and artifice is no less apparent here than in the techniques which he rejected. But the seemingly fortuitous way in which the segments of the novel are ordered would, he hoped, seem less artificial than the presentation of material in the narrative, interior monologue and cinematic modes.

The 'legend' which 'Lawrence Lucifer' is creating is referred to in other parts of the novel as the 'new myth' which he intends to be a replacement for the old. Later in this chapter we will deal with the meaning of Durrell's 'new myth', but at this point we must deal with the essential technical difficulty which he faced in attempting to record it: the nature of language as a system of communication. The linguistic concept which underlies mythopoesis and, for that matter, poetry, is that all language is at best tangential. Ernst Cassirer's point regarding the relationship of myth and 'the doctrine of the intimate relation between names and essences, and of their latent identity', is of relevance here.¹¹ The

"names of God" principle serves as a good example in this context. None of the names of God is the true name of God because, according to the magical doctrines, man, knowing the true name of God, would have control over his deity. In this context, all names are allusions -- that is, they are tangential referents which enable us to discuss the essence of deity without directly referring to it. We therefore have two categories of the same subject: the "thing in itself", and the referent which comes to stand for that "thing" -- the deity per se and, for example, "Jehovah". Now, as we shall see, the Platonic theory of "forms" is analogous to the concept which we are discussing. The idea of numena and phenomena parallels that of the "thing in itself" and the allusive referent. Numena are those things which, held in the mind of the deity, are the pure "forms" upon which all material things, or phenomena, are modelled. Only phenomena, the imperfect reflections of the numena, are "knowable"; that is, man can come to terms with them, but never with the unknowable numena which they mirror. But, strictly speaking, numen means "deity". Consequently, there can be no differentiation made between the deity and the numena -- they are identical and unknowable, and by extension unapproachable

through the medium of language.

Nonetheless, the myth and the poem are the closest means men have of revealing the tenuous truth behind existence. Metaphorically, the myth or poem may be seen as a "window" on this truth. In these terms, two things are obvious: first, that the poet or maker feels a need to communicate, and, second, that he is aware of the impossibility of communication on any basis other than the tangential. That is, the "reality" which the poet or maker intuitively wishes to express is, in the end, inexpressible. As Durrell says,

There is such confusion when I set out in an attempt to begin this spiritual adventure, because the fine logical borders of my reality completely disappear when a word comes to seize them; I attempt to put myself in a jail, as it were, in the padded cell of language, only to discover that the whole external façade is implicated in this process.¹²

The logic of the grammarian is in part similar to the logic of linear time, specifically in that the rules governing the order of parts in a sentence are akin to what Durrell calls 'the geometrical insanity of day followed by night followed by day'. This being the case, he must dispose of 'the language of time',¹³ in

favour of the more viable "language of space". It follows naturally from his assertion of the 'time of poem' that the new spatial language is to be found in the metaphors, images and symbols of myth.

He makes his intentions clear in his characterisation of 'a negress, Miss Smith', 'an inky personality which belongs purely to the world of the image'. 'Try to make her plausible, and you will find yourself mixing her in a stew of images, torn limb from limb from the mythologies of Asia. She is my one connection with the lost worlds.' I treasure her. I would not know what to say if she left and deprived me of that world of myth which I can see so clearly at work in her.¹⁴ In her reading aloud from Chaucer, Skelton or Lydgate, 'Lawrence Lucifer' finds himself moving away from the rational, logical world of speech into 'a dimension of pure sensation'.

Her giant mouth moves up and down
the page, fuddled with language
like a gorged bee, producing ever
more sharply conflicting modulations,
snoring rhythms, hamstrings,
incisions, tubers; woodwinds

I am sitting here with my eyes
shut, watching the language cross
my imagination, each syllable a
color. A visible notation of
images thrown up, theme and counter-
theme, all mixed in a crazy fugue.¹⁵

'Is this amusia, aphasia, agraphia, alexia, abulia?' he asks. 'It is life.'

Throughout The Black Book there is a rejection of the systems of linear language which the words 'aphasia, agraphia [and] alexia' suggest. Agraphia and alexia -- the inability to write, and the inability to understand written speech -- are aspects of aphasia, the 'impairment or loss of the faculty of using or understanding spoken or written language'. In terms of the 'new myth' which Durrell is trying to create, the mantic, the runic, the hieroglyphic, the mystagogic, the glyptic, the ideographic and even the mathematical language of surds¹⁶ are all inadequate because of their linearity. The movement is toward the world of sensation and, hence, toward life. Sitting over the Ionian, 'planning an equipment of words to snare these hours which are so obviously secure from the dragnets of language',¹⁷ Durrell has realised the ultimate futility of writing. But write he must, and the language of poem is the only viable medium.

I have traced the germ of action
to the poem, and it is the poem
which I would like to embed in the
personality: an everlasting spatial
heraldry to burn across personal
action like the brand of Cain.¹⁸

The affirmation of sensation and the rejection of the more usual and logical systems of communication is the natural outcome of the aphasic state into which 'Lawrence Lucifer' has fallen. John Wilson's rather simplistic rejection of poetic communication, although it is antithetical and hence antagonistic to Durrell's viewpoint, nonetheless states the case clearly.

The beliefs of men, and perhaps particularly their religious beliefs, tend to seek expression in the most poetic form.

This is desirable for many reasons, provided only that we do not lose sight of their prose meaning. Pure poetry is one thing; nobody 'takes it seriously'. Pure prose, such as a scientific textbook, is another; nobody feels inclined to read it in the sing-song, faintly mystical voice which we reserve for poetry. But mixed communications are dangerous, for we may easily allow their poetic force to blind us to the prose meaning. And if we are supposed to take the prose meaning seriously, we may very well find ourselves not knowing what our own beliefs mean, or whether they are true.¹⁹

Wilson's comments mirror the methodological approach to language, and by extension myth, which Cassirer decries in Language and Myth. It is the belief in language as precise rather than tangential which Durrell has rejected in the state of aphasia which 'Lawrence Lucifer' enters

through the sound of Miss Smith reading the medieval English poets aloud. 'It is a season of the spirit in which the idea even loses its meaning, loses the bright distinguishing edge, and falls back into its original type, sensation. Words are no good. If you were to die, for instance, it would mean snow.'²⁰

As we shall see, there is a direct link between the 'new myth' of The Black Book and 'the heraldic universe'. Just as 'the original type' of the expressed idea is sensation, so the physical nature of communication is the key to the "language" of 'the heraldic universe'. 'If you were to die, for instance, it would mean snow', and both Zero and Asylum In The Snow (1936) employ this associative or symbolic "meaning" for 'snow'. In a similar way, Durrell rejects all the usual verb tenses as ineffectual.

Let me drop the historic present. It is a device that looks a little shallow after a time: as the conjurer I am self-conscious, yes, there is the aorist. It was up my sleeve all the time.²¹

It is forced upon me to write of you always in the gnomic aorist. For this is the new vocabulary which I am learning with ease.²²

The 'gnomic aorist' tense is the tense employed in apho-

risms, those pithy little comments which are intended to express some general truth. The 'new vocabulary' is the associative or symbolic language of myth. It is "the language of space", the language of symbols in which communication is refined to the utmost degree but in a way which is qualitatively different from 'time-speech'.²³ The non-linear grammar of "space-speech" is 'the grammar of waves', its syntax 'the curious syntax which passes between [individuals] like a current'.²⁴ Used always and only in the world which is 'outside chronologies'; used only to communicate essential "truths", the 'new vocabulary' is that of 'the heraldic universe'.

Time in The Black Book.

Time in the third novel of Durrell's early trilogy does not exist in the linear sense. Having rejected the artificial time of the narrative, interior monologue and cinematic modes, Durrell found himself left with the only viable time there can be: 'the time of poem'. In short, 'the time of poem' is an eternal constant, and the material of poem is directly related to the material of myth. For the material of poem is a reflection of the eternal constant embodied in the myth, filtered through the subjective senses of the poet. The relationship between the material of poem, 'the time of poem'

and 'the heraldic universe' is made clear in the following rather lengthy excerpt from Durrell's private journal.

Underneath the whole question of poetry an unstateable proposition, like the shadowed side of the moon. It is something like the proposition mentioned in Plato's letters; the proposition he had never been able to put into words. This creative element I call, privately, "The Heraldic Element". For it seems that if poetry is not exactly lying about the world it is talking about the things of the substance in a very special relation to time. When I write "olive-trees" for example, I am always thinking of the grove sacred to Artemis near Kalamata.

This is private association: no doubt both the archaeologist and the landed proprietor could furnish separate scales of association. How, then, does my olive exist? Is its life purely dependent on the associative scheme of the reader? To an enormous extent; but it seems to me that my olives -- if I should ever become an artist, and they to become truly mine -- would in some sense be detached from the temporal continuum of association and live out a separate existence in a sort of stasis. I would have burgled them from the temporal process and made them an extension of what I felt about them. I use the word "Heraldic" for this life because the same sort of symbolic substitution is indulged in by the herald.²⁵

The 'new myth' which Durrell is attempting to create in

The Black Book is intended, like his olives, to be detached from 'the temporal continuum of association' in order that it may exist in 'the time of poem'. Now, inasmuch as a particular poem belongs to a particular age, it reflects and to some extent comments upon that age as seen through the subjectivity of its author. But it simultaneously reflects what Jung calls the archetypal experience of all men. The symbols and images of the twentieth century poet are at the same time those of the tribal past out of which modern man has come. In great part this concept provides the basis for the 'new myth' of the novel.

In my imagination I follow the myth wherever it burst forth, in Tuscany, Sparta; where you can still see it living in the stiff green candles of the cypress, the contorted silver of Byzance.

It is a form of escape. I identify myself with anyone and anything who has escaped death for a vivid history.

I establish my ancestry as greedily as any suburban householder, grabbing at the lost men, the scourgers, the writers who ate whips and breathed scorpions. In the severest extremity too, even the brothers among the caves, the troglodytes, the men with the greenstick backbones, the murderous syllables that were not words but spoken actions.²⁶

The Black Book was intended to be 'a kind of spiritual itinerary' which would 'establish the novel once and for all as a mode which is already past its senium'; 'a piece of literary perpetual motion, balanced on a hair, maintaining its precarious equilibrium between life and heraldry,'²⁷ which would state the indisputable fact that 'art must no longer exist to depict man, but to invoke God.'²⁸ That intent implies an amplified view of the concept of volumetric time which Durrell had first employed in Panic Spring. As we stated earlier, time in The Black Book is never linear, never chronological. Nor is it

prediluvial, paleolithic, geologic --
there is no chronological qualification
which expresses accurately the age of
this community. It is outside chronologies.²⁹

Durrell's concern is to present 'the crater of time which is chaos, original disorder',³⁰ the moment at which all matter exists eternally without reference to the 'geometrical insanity of day followed by night followed by day, etc.'. ³¹

Gregory's view of himself, expressed early in the novel, is quite in keeping with his creator's intent.

It is I who change; constant, like a
landmark of the locality, the lumber

[of proverbs, for example] remains.
 Like a lake seen from different
 altitudes during a journey, its
 position never varying: only its
 aspect altering in relation to my
 own place in the landscape.³²

The vivid immediacy of the events of the novel, for its creator as well as for the reader, does away completely with any sense of history, any sense of past, present or future. Like the community of Honeywoods, the commercial school at which 'Lawrence Lucifer' once worked, the world of The Black Book is 'outside chronologies'. It exists only in the spatial mode, its events and characters inter-related in a way made possible only in terms of volumetric time.³³ With reference to content alone, there are three quite distinct eras presented in the novel: Durrell's Indian childhood; the period between the time he left school and the time he emigrated to Corfu; and the period in which he wrote the novel. Generally speaking, these cover the material of Pied Piper of Lovers and Panic Spring. But in the scheme which Durrell employs to structure the novel they co-exist, with no reference either to biography or chronology.

Letters with Indian stamps on
 them, Halma, Ludo, Baedeker, Old
 Moore, dripping, sequel, the green
 house lit with a green rain from

heaven, the haggard fingers stitching a winding cloth for the morning It is difficult to write it. There is a transition from that place to this, where I sit and watch Lobo work at the map he will never finish. But it is immediate. The connecting links have been snapped, or been burst into pieces. I live only in my imagination which is timeless. Therefore the location of this world which I am trying to hammer out for you on a blunt typewriter, over the Ionian, is the location of space merely. I can only fix it with any certainty on the map.³⁴

In his later Key to Modern Poetry (1952), Durrell states that 'time is the measure of our death-consciousness'.³⁵ The Black Book is 'an agon for the dead, a chronicle for the living',³⁶ and as such is directly involved with that linear definition of events which humanity calls "history". We may define historical consciousness as a consciousness of the patterns of human existence which are seemingly of relevance in that they help to define what is loosely termed "the present". As Tarquin points out, "'My God, how seldom we realize time. Do you hear me? Eh? And it's going through us the whole time. We are running through it without realizing it.'"³⁷ More than any other character in the novel, Tarquin is the embodiment of the 'death-

consciousness' of the English people: 'Tarquin in bed, surrounded by the bones of history, dying piecemeal in life, dying.'³⁸ For Durrell, there is no past and no future. The patterns of human life exist in an eternal present. Any other view is symptomatic of death rather than of life.

'The Heraldic Universe' in The Black Book.

In order to discuss fully Durrell's presentation of 'the heraldic universe' in his third novel, we must first examine the world-view which he was rejecting: that is, the world of 'the English death'. Then we can move on to a consideration of 'the heraldic universe' per se and, finally, to an examination of the 'new myth' which he hopes will replace the old. That last topic will lead us logically into an examination of the relationship of man to the natural world in the novel.

In the letter to Alan G. Thomas which is included in Book Two of the novel, Durrell characterises himself as Christ, with Thomas in the role of Satan offering him the kingdoms of England from the tower of a priory.

It was the temptation of the devil,
the vision of the cities offered
to me from an immense mountain-top.
The devil! what should be more
plausible than that you should be
the Black Saint himself -- panurgic,

long-nosed, calculating bastard
that you are! You were offering
me, in your oblique way, the whole
of England -- the masques, the
viols, the swans, the mists, the
dooms, the fogs: you were offering
me a medieval death in which I
could live forever, stifled in
the pollen of breviaries, noctu-
aries, bestiaries: split silk
and tumbrils, aesthetic horses
and ruined Abbeys.³⁹

The 'medieval death', associated here with the English
cultural "tradition", is the 'death' against which
Durrell is battling in an attempt to free himself from
the stifling 'pollen of breviaries' from which Walsh
Clifton escaped in Pied Piper of Lovers. The cultural
milieu in which the jungli from India found his per-
sonality shackled in that early novel is the same milieu
at which the renegade 'Lawrence Lucifer' strikes out in
The Black Book.

For Groddeck, 'those who mourn the dead and wish
them back are themselves dead, spiritually dead'.⁴⁰ The
virtual necrolatry practised by the English people is
the 'true disease' which 'Lawrence Lucifer' hopes to
chronicle in the novel. His view of "the past" is
diametrically opposed to that of his race.

All day long I pace the museums,
inspecting the relics of our history,
all carefully laid out and labeled
in scholarly hands on post cards.

At night I meditate on the quantities of pure gold which we house so carelessly in glass cases, unaware that this same putrid stuff is decaying in our arteries. Is it possible to keep the vitality of centuries in a bottle, with a post card on it to hint at an identity long since lost? My own history, my present, is confused by the death which I see gathered around me I cannot live because the decomposing bodies of my ancestors dog me at every turn. They are not living in their myth, but dead, influencing my dying, not my life. That is why action is so erratic, so full of extremes, because the hypaethral universes which should live in us⁴¹ today are dead, and behind glass.

The necrolatry of the English people is manifested in their practice of keeping 'the hypaethral universes' behind walls, to be viewed as something dead rather than as the vital components of the tradition of which every human being is a part. It is for this reason that the 'pure gold' which is housed in glass cases has become that 'putrid stuff' which is decaying in the arteries of the English people.

The living myth of tradition in England has become, through the worship of the past and of the dead, the vehicle for the 'doom' which slowly but surely kills the English. The old myth has lost its efficacy for, like

the unused 'pure gold' which is its parallel, it is totally worthless if not in circulation. In great part, this is a product of the penchant for precision which came to the fore in England during the nineteenth century. The "timeless" myths have been specifically tied down to the 'geometrical insanity of day followed by night followed by day'.⁴² The comment on the chronology of Honeywoods being neither 'prediluvial, paleolithic [nor] geologic' hints at the view of the nineteenth century which Durrell held when The Black Book was written. This was the period in which, among others, three "sciences" came into prominence: the "science" of Biblical exegesis; the "science" of anthropology; and the "science" of geology. But the dates for the occurrences in the novel cannot be reckoned by means of these chronologies.

Nor can they be reckoned by means of the "science" of philology which, during the same century, explored the foundations of the ancient myths in an attempt to formulate a theory of mythopoesis. Seeing that the old myths -- both panick and Christian -- are no longer viable since they have been shut away for observation, Durrell is attempting to create a new myth, 'the

contemplative myth'. As Ernst Cassirer points out, mythopoesis and the "science" of mythology are quite different things.

What in the spirit of myth itself functions as a living and immediate conviction becomes a postulate of reflective procedure for the science of mythology; the doctrine of the intimate relation between names and essences, and of their latent identity, is here set up as a methodological principle.⁴³

Durrell would agree with Cassirer. Subjected to the methodology of a highly imperfect and notably wrong-headed "science", encased in glass like the specimens in a scientific experiment, the myths and traditions have become stagnant and, in their stagnation, the breeding ground for 'the English death'. As we shall see in the discussion which follows, Durrell is aware that 'it is not the first time in history that the gulf has opened up between the people and their makers -- the artists', and that 'the chasm has never been so vast, so uncrossable'.⁴⁴ Yet, nonetheless, he assumes the role of teacher, hoping to delineate 'the heraldic universe' to the English people who are still trapped in the museums of their own necrolatry.

The letter to Thomas makes this clear. The world

of English tradition, the 'pollen of breviaries' by which he was stifled, Durrell wishes to reject. But, having done so in exiling himself to Corfu, he senses the importance of having at least one contact in the world he has left who is aware of his reasons for going.

That is why, when I tell you I have rejected it, I want you to understand clearly the terms of that rejection. That is an England I am going to kill, because by giving it a quietus once and for all, I can revive it!

The important thing is this: if I succeed, and I will succeed, then I shall become in a sense, the first Englishman.⁴⁵

The 'revival' of England which he mentions here is a foreshadowing of the view of artistic creation which Durrell puts in the mind of Darley in the opening pages of The Alexandria Quartet.⁴⁶ The implied death, however, involves not only England but Durrell himself. In reference to the 'generation enwombed' he says, 'I am one of the generation I would like to murder. I cannot escape.'⁴⁷

There are a number of "wombs" in the novel; in fact, Durrell describes it himself as a 'back-to-the-womber's allegory'.⁴⁸ In part, the "womb" in which the post-war generation was malformed was the cinema

theatre, and we must digress here for the moment in order to explore the metaphysical import of the cinema as yet another cause of 'the English death'. The effect of the cinema in The Black Book is very much like that of the 'feelies' in Aldous Huxley's Brave New World (1932): '"Take a holiday from reality whenever you like, and come back without so much as a headache or a mythology."' ⁴⁹ In Durrell's view, the people of England are like the cave dwellers of Plato's Republic. While convinced that what they see is "reality", they live forever in the darkness of the cave.

Durrell's concern is with the cinema as one manifestation of 'a whole dormant Platonic principle which, in essence, is England -- the marrow and bone of England'. ⁵⁰ The principle to which he is referring is the view of reality expressed in the cave allegory of Book VII of The Republic. The mechanics of that cave are of special relevance to this discussion.

"Imagine mankind dwelling in an underground cave with a long entrance open to the light across the whole width of the cave; in this they have been from childhood; with necks and legs fettered, so they have to stay where they are. They cannot move their heads round because of the fetters, and they can only look forward, but light

comes to them from fire burning behind them higher up at a distance. Between the fire and the prisoners is a road above their level, and along it imagine a low wall has been built"

"I see," he said.

"See, then, bearers carrying along this wall all sorts of articles which they hold projecting above the wall, statues of men and other living things, made of stone or wood and all kinds of stuff"

"What a remarkable image," he said, "and what remarkable prisoners!"

"Just like ourselves," I said.

"For, first of all, tell me this: What do you think such people would have seen of themselves and each other except their shadows, which the fire casts on the opposite wall of the cave?"

"I don't see how they could see anything else," said he, "if they were compelled to keep their heads unmoving all their lives!"⁵¹

Purely in terms of the projection of shadows and the construction of the cave, cinema and the cinema theatre would appear to be a mechanized twentieth century version of Plato's cave. The darkened theatre is directly analogous to the underground cave, while the means of projection is strikingly similar to the system suggested by Plato. As in the cave allegory, the cinematic projection system employs a light source, before which are passed articles (the pictures on the celluloid) which are cast 'on the opposite wall of the cave'.

Of greater importance, however, is the relationship between the nature of the "reality" presented to the troglodytes in The Republic and the nature of the "reality" viewed by the masses in the cinema theatre. The reality viewed by Plato's cave dwellers is a reality at three removes. That is to say, the articles carried by the bearers are not real but only 'statues . . . made of stone or wood and all kinds of stuff'. Consequently, the shadows cast on the wall of the cave are reflections of reflections of reality. The same is true of the images projected on the screen of a cinema theatre, especially when they are intended to represent some "historical" figure or event.

These considerations are primarily technical ones, but there is one further analogy between the images of the cave and those of the cinema theatre which must be explored if we are to deal fully with cinema both as a cause of 'the English death' and as an unsuitable model for the structuring of this novel. "Live" cinematography, when it is a recording of events at the time of their occurrence, presents reality at only two removes. When those events are reconstructed using actors, reality is presented at three removes. In the Thirties, however, another form of cinematography had

made its appearance which presented reality at four removes: the "animated" film whose chief prophet was Walt Disney. This form of film-making seemingly involves total creation, in that it does not depend either upon human actors or upon sets which approximate real scenes. However, these "creations" exist at the expense of humanity. They are either anthropomorphised beings (Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck), idealised human beings (Cinderella, Snow White), or idealised animals which are at the same time anthropomorphic (Bambi). In every case they embody either human virtues or human foibles, and these are always necessarily presented as caricatures. Wyndham Lewis's description of 'film filibusters' is more than apt when applied to the Disney creations.

One could imagine them as diminutive, phthisic, gutter-people, who had started in gutter-theatricals, prospered, spread over the world . . . caricaturing any eccentricity, or imitating any particularly brutal behavior on the part of the full-grown, "normal," master people by whom they were surrounded -- falling in and out of love, to show that they were real and not just puppets, and even taking their desperate pretense of reality so far at times as to blow their 52 papier-mâché brains out

For Durrell, these fantastic, malformed bastard

children of the machine age had begun to appear like a new pantheon of gods more appropriate to the century which had created them than the figures of either the Christian myth or the myths which had preceded it.

Across the fatal pantheon of the
panic world, so irrationally mourned
-- not for its own sake, but because
we have no pantheon of our own --
slides the figure of Mickey Mouse,
top-hatted maniac with the rubber
pelvis, as blithe as the gonococcus
in the veins of Dives.

Where is this new myth coming from?
Where is the great heroic figure on
which it is to be shaped?

We must make the way straight for
the appearance of Mickey Mouse, who
will arrive together with his in-
visible penis which he is never
allowed to pull or twang.⁵³

But the characteristics of the hero in which Mickey Mouse had been attired in such early films as "Steamboat Willie" were not, as Durrell well knew, the characteristics upon which a new myth could or should be based. While he might well be 'the sterilized paragon of the new epoch', Mickey Mouse is not reality. Like the shadows on the wall of Plato's cave, he and the "real life" actors of "live" films are, for Durrell, the symptoms of the fettered existence of the English people, and the cinematic mode cannot serve as a format for the

'spiritual adventure' which he hoped to show had taken him out of the cave and into the light of reality.

To a great extent, The Black Book is an act of ritual murder. Pied Piper of Lovers presents a view of England as a perverted nineteenth century "heaven" which is carried over into the third novel, particularly in those passages in which Durrell rejects the English tradition and values. 'That is an England I am going to kill,' he says, and the ritual murder takes the form of the book itself. In a letter to Miller, Durrell posits the theory that 'ALL ART IN THE GERM IS CURATIVE'.⁵⁴ The 'curative' nature of The Black Book, then, is two-fold: first, it will cure the English people of 'the English death' and, second, it will provide a 'new myth' upon which the psyche of the world can be re-ordered. 'Death' Gregory is the example which Durrell provides of the writer who, attempting to cure his race, kills himself. As Gregory says, 'To tell the objective truth would be to cut my own throat. But each line I add to this makes me more and more reluctant to finish the job.'⁵⁵ Ultimately, however, Gregory did succeed. Tarquin never will.

He has not even the courage of
Gregory's death: that quaint suicide.
Gregory who shot himself

dead with the green pen. In this mythology, so fragmentary, with so many drops of feeling and expression, Gregory is almost a complete symbol. It was a gallant suicide.⁵⁶

Gregory's 'suicide' ended in his lapsing into complete silence, however, and this is not what Durrell intends.

The return to the womb; the utter change from 'time-speech' to the language of space; the repeated references to reincarnated deities (Christ, Osiris); the emphasis on the eternal rather than the temporal -- these suggest a view of death, not as terminal, but as an interim stage. In 1937, The Black Book was intended to be the first volume of a trilogy which would include "The Book of Miracles" and "The Book of the Dead".⁵⁷ Pied Piper of Lovers -- with its cryptic 'I am. I will not be.' -- is the first tentative approach which Durrell made to the mystical view of life and death. The 'portentous pattern' of Panic Spring, tied as it is to the natural world, is another, slightly clearer view of the same concept. But The Black Book is the final statement of this process in the early novels, and its sources are both Platonic and Tibetan. The interest in Tibet and things Tibetan is obvious as early as Pied Piper, especially as the account of Walsh

Clifton's childhood reflects Durrell's early letters to Miller.⁵⁸ The Black Book is larded with references to Tibet, some of which seem almost to be summaries of parts of the first novel. The mystical concepts associated with Tibet, however, are really relevant only to the third novel.

Now, there are two famous "books of the dead". One, The Egyptian Book of the Dead, was translated by E. A. Wallis Budge and published in 1890; the other, the Bardo Thödol, was compiled and edited by W. Y. Evans-Wentz and issued in 1927 as The Tibetan Book of the Dead. As Evans-Wentz points out, there is reason for assuming 'some ultimate cultural relationship between the two'.⁵⁹ Taken in conjunction with the Platonic doctrine of metempsychosis, the principles of the Bardo Thödol provide the best clue to the nature of Durrell's 'heraldic universe'.

We have discussed the concept of illusion versus reality as one 'Platonic principle' at work in the novel, particularly in relation to the 'new myth' and Durrell's rejection of the cinema. But there is a second 'Platonic principle' at work in The Black Book, a principle which is not made clear except with reference to Cefalû,

Durrell's fourth novel. While Chapter Four will be devoted to a consideration of that novel, we must refer to the epigram with which it begins if we are to fully understand the relationship of metempsychosis and The Tibetan Book of the Dead.

To this writer's knowledge, the following quotation appeared only in the 1947 first edition of Cefalu⁶⁰. When the book was reissued as The Dark Labyrinth, it was omitted.

"Well, and is there not an opposite
of life as sleep is the opposite of
waking?

True, he said.

And what is it?

Death, he said.

-- The Phaedo⁶⁰

The Phaedo is Phaidion's reconstruction for Echecrates of the death of Socrates. Primary among the considerations of Socrates just before his death was the theory of metempsychosis, to which he attributed his lack of fear at dying. In essence, he believed that, after death, the soul moves either back into life or on to another plane of existence. The quotation from The Phaedo is the opening of a dialogue between Socrates and Cebes which concludes with the view of death as an interim rather than a terminal stage, in much the same

way that sleep 'is the opposite of waking'.

According to Socrates there are, between two opposite states of 'being', two states of 'becoming'. This being true of all opposite states of 'being', he says,

Then I will speak of one of the two pairs that I mentioned just now, and its becomings: you tell me about the other. My pair is sleeping and being awake, and I say that being awake comes into being from sleeping and sleeping from being awake, and that their becomings are falling asleep and waking up.⁶¹

Staying with the analogy, Socrates then proceeds to draw from Cebes the admission 'that the living are born from the dead, no less than the dead from the living: and since this is true, there would seem to be sufficient proof that the souls of the dead must of necessity exist somewhere, whence we assume they are born again'.⁶²

The Tibetan Book of the Dead teaches essentially the same theory. 'That the living do come from the dead,' says Evans-Wentz, 'as Socrates intuitively perceived as he was about to drink the hemlock and experience death, this treatise maintains, not in virtue of tradition or belief, but on the sound basis of the unequivocal testimony of yogins who claim to have died

and re-entered the human womb consciously.'⁶³ The Bardo Thödol is an ancient Buddhist text of which the major significance to our study lies in its role as 'a mystic manual for guidance through the Otherworld of many illusions and realms, whose frontiers are death and birth'.⁶⁴ In great part, the basis of its teachings lies in the doctrine of metempsychosis, or the transference of the principle of consciousness from the dead body to another, living body. This is accomplished in a physical way by the intra-uterine journey of the "soul" and its lodging in the living body of an unborn child. The book intends to teach the enlightenment which is necessary, not only to face death, but also to live in such a way that the moment of death and the subsequent reincarnation will be facilitated. To this end, it describes in detail three Bardo stages, indicating what the individual "soul" can expect in each.

The Bardo stages are analogous to the states of 'becoming' discussed by Socrates and Cebes in The Phaedo. Etymologically, 'Bar-do literally means "between (Bar) two (do)", i.e., "between two [states]" -- the state between death and rebirth -- and, therefore, "Intermediate" or "Transitional [State]".'⁶⁵ The first Bardo --

the Chikhai Bardo, or "Transitional State of the Moment of Death" -- is the stage at which the 'Clear Light' dawns on the deceased. This first stage parallels the original state in which the released prisoner would find himself in Plato's cave allegory. Unable to stand the firelight, first of all, he would be unable to perceive even the models whose shadows he had been seeing, and would tend to trust more in the shadows.⁶⁶ The same is true in the Chikhai Bardo stage: because the mind of the deceased cannot grasp the 'Clear Light' in its primordial quality, it views that light karmically obscured; that is, in terms of its previous existence.

In the second or Chönyid Bardo stage -- "Transitional State of [the Experiencing or Glimpsing of] Reality" -- the percipient views in an objective manner what he has thought and done in life. These hallucinations are produced by 'the karmic reflexes of actions done by him in the earth-plane body'.⁶⁷ This parallels Plato's description of what would happen to the troglodyte if he were forced up to 'the real light'; that is,

first he would most easily look
at shadows, after that images of
mankind and the rest in water, lastly
the things themselves.⁶⁸

The second Bardo stage can lead in one of two directions.

The deceased, faced by the karmic hallucinations, will normally wish to return to the sangsāric existence⁶⁹ and, wishing to be reborn, will enter the third or Sidpa Bardo stage -- "Transitional State of or while seeking Rebirth". This third stage 'ends when the principle of consciousness has taken rebirth in the human or some other world, or in one of the paradise realms'.⁷⁰ The principle of consciousness, then, may be reborn either into the sangsāric experience or into 'one of the paradise realms'. The parallel here is with the passage in The Republic in which Socrates suggests to Glaucon that those who have experienced "reality" not be allowed to remain in its light, the 'Clear Light' of the Bardo Thödol, but be taken down again into the cave to instruct the prisoners. Because of his utilitarian views, Plato cannot allow the prisoner to remain in the 'paradise realm'. In most other respects, however, the parallel is complete.

The undergoing of the Bardo stages by the deceased soul, and the idea of life and death as two similar states of 'being', may be viewed as a progression. That is to say, a cyclic view is appropriate here, both in terms of the Bardo Thödol and of The Phaedo. The birth-death-rebirth cycle is therefore the usual state of

affairs. However, as Evans-Wentz points out,

If escape from the Intermediate (Sidpa Bardo) State is not achieved, through rebirth into some other state . . . within the symbolic period of Forty-nine Days, . . . the deceased remains subject to all the karmic illusions of the Bardo, blissful or miserable as the case may be, and progress is impossible.⁷¹

This is the case with the great majority of the characters in The Black Book. 'The English death' may be seen, from this point of view, as the inability to progress into rebirth, and the 'karmic illusions' are most certainly paralleled in the miasma of 'breviaries, noctuaries, bestiaries: split silk and tumbrils, aesthetic horses and ruined Abbeys' which spread the disease among the English people. While Chamberlain and Tarquin, Perez and Gregory are all dead or dying, the symbol of non-progress in the novel is Lobo, sitting over a map of London which he will never finish.⁷² All journeys, as Durrell elsewhere suggests, are metaphors for an exploration of oneself.⁷³ In the same way, all roads may be seen as analogous to "the Way" or "Path" toward enlightenment which the Bardo Thödol teaches. The very fact that Lobo will never finish his map -- that is, will never find himself -- is indicative of the situation

in which most of the characters in the novel find themselves. And, considering that in the end they are representative caricatures of the English people, this is the difficulty which Durrell found in England and from which he escaped.

While the English are trapped in an existence which is analogous to the Sidpa Bardo stage, 'Lawrence Lucifer' has escaped into another realm. To state that he has entered 'one of the paradise realms' in which he will remain for eternity would be to misread Durrell's intent. If we qualify the statement somewhat, however, we approach the essential quality of 'the heraldic universe' which Durrell is at some pains not to describe too clearly to his readers. The clearest parallel with 'the heraldic universe' is the transitory union with "the One" which mystics of all faiths have for centuries claimed to have experienced. The stress here must be on transitory -- the experience cannot last indefinitely. But while it lasts, the mystic experiences a creative rapture in which the form of communication -- sometimes oral, sometimes written -- is completely unknown to him and, when the rapture ceases, may indeed not be understood. The non-linear, highly symbolic and associative spatial language with which 'Lawrence Lucifer' is increasingly deluged

throughout The Black Book is intended to approximate this language of rapture. Simply stated, he is "possessed", and is only a medium for transcribing the material which he records. Statements similar to the following recur throughout the latter portions of the novel.

Sweet, it is not your decorations
that I am putting down here, your
soft wagging cypresses, stoles, ca-
thedrals, covenants, bones of dead
saints. It is this barony whose
language I am taking at dictation,
without even waiting to know whether
we can decipher it with the help of
a known hieroglyph!⁷⁴

Possession, however, is not a constant thing. The kind of writing Durrell was doing in The Black Book he considered real; anything else than composing 'for full orchestra' was merely 'literary gardening'.⁷⁵ But real writing, he came to realise, was agony. The whole of his 21 July 1937 letter to Henry Miller is indicative of this fact, but his specific comment on 'the heraldic universe' states the case clearly. 'The little world, the heraldic universe, is a cyclic, periodic thing in me -- like a bout of drinking. I am not a permanent inhabitant -- only on Wednesdays by invitation. I enter and leave -- and presto, the ordinary individual is born, the Jekyll.'⁷⁶

Hyde possessing the body of Jekyll is analogous to the creative power possessing the body of Durrell the writer when 'real books' are in the making. In the end, 'the heraldic universe' is a supremely personal world, not open to view nor, in consequence, to description. There are innumerable parallels. The individual who has attained the Taoist "Way" has entered his own 'heraldic universe'. The mystic who has achieved union with "the One" has also entered 'the little world', although he cannot explain that union logically. From another standpoint, he who attains to the insulae fortunatae, the "paradise terrestre" of Pindar et al., has in effect achieved that combination of spiritual and physical existence for which Christian Marlowe sought in vain in Panic Spring and which Ruth Adams has found in Cefalu^u. They have all achieved the ultimate goal. But, as the difficulties with language in The Black Book indicate, neither the path nor the goal may be stated and, like the initiated Apuleius, Durrell may only communicate these things tangentially, through symbols and veiled allusions. Durrell's own remark about the problems involved with his theory makes this clear.

If anything comes of this theory,

I'll write a book which might indicate the locality of the system. Of course one starts with that damning premise of Lao-tse: the Tao that is the subject of discussion is not the true Tao.⁷⁷

Durrell had not yet read Suzuki,⁷⁸ but he had read both Lao-tse and Chuang-tzu.⁷⁹ The cryptic note at the end of Pied Piper of Lovers; Marlowe's difficulty in pinning 'The New Quietism' down to a precisely-worded system in Panic Spring; the inability, finally, to differentiate the language of space from the language of time in The Black Book: all of these indicate an inability to get round 'that damning premise of Lao-tse'. We can say that 'the heraldic universe' is a highly personal experience; we can say that it is "like" certain other recorded experiences which in themselves are not entirely clear -- but in the end we are left with a Zen statement: "'the heraldic universe' is".

We noted earlier that 'Lawrence Lucifer' has rejected the 'lovely dim wombland' of the cinema theatre because it is more related to the cultural slavery endured by the English than to the rebirth which that culture so clearly requires. And, too, the 'myth' of the twentieth century which was born from that 'womb' has as its hero Mickey

Mouse and is, therefore, only a perverted image of the old myth which has lost its efficacy. Nevertheless, the symbol of the womb retains its power to inform the 'new myth' which Durrell is creating in The Black Book.

Ensnared now, in his imagination, in the womb of Hilda the prostitute, where 'there is room for one thing only -- pure thought!',⁸⁰ 'Lawrence Lucifer' must begin to shape the myth of the twentieth century. Like Jonah, he has entered the belly of 'the black whale, Hilda',⁸¹ and must await his rebirth into the world of forms which is 'the heraldic universe'.

Jonah, I say to myself, quietly, persistently. It is the only word left over [from?] the dead vocabularies. The only sound which I dare use in this red ballon [sic], where I am inhabited by space. It has become my JAH. On the strange numen of this sound, left over from the drowned languages, I shall shape the contemplative myth.⁸²

Durrell's 'heraldic universe' is precisely the numenal world, the world in which volumetric time is the only constant. The 'contemplative myth' which informs 'the heraldic universe' is an amalgam of Christian and pre-Christian references, all of which share common elements. As Joseph Campbell points out,

It is amazing, but now undeniable, that the vocabulary of symbol is to such an extent constant throughout the world that it must be recognized to represent a single pictorial script, through which realizations of a tremendum experienced through life are given statement. Apparent also is the fact that not only in higher cultures, but also among many of the priests and visionaries of the folk cultures, these symbols -- or, as we so often say, "gods" -- are not thought to be powers in themselves but are signs through which the powers of life and its revelations are recognized and released: powers of the soul as well as of the living world. Furthermore, . . . the signs may be arranged to make fresh poetic statements concerning the great themes of ultimate concern; and from such a pictorial poem new waves of realization ripple out through the whole range of the world heritage of myth.⁸³

Although Durrell has realised that the old myths are no longer effectual in the twentieth century, this does not mean that he cannot use them to inform the 'new myth' which he is creating. 'The signs may be arranged to make fresh poetic statements concerning the great themes of ultimate concern', and this is what Durrell is doing in The Black Book. Like Yeats, he is prophesying that a new age is upon the world; but, unlike Yeats, he does not ask 'what rough beast, its hour come round at last, slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?' There

are two passages in the novel which echo both the final lines of Yeats's "The Second Coming" and Eliot's "Journey of The Magi". The only difference between these passages is the verb tense. In the first, the tense of "to be born" is future; in the second, past.

Cross over to Bethlehem. They will
be able to tell you for certain
whether something has been born
from this discord of the elements,
or whether the fiat has gone forth;
whether this is a pre-nativity or
a post-mortem!⁸⁴

The repetition of this passage emphasizes the major theme of the novel: the creation of a myth for the twentieth century which, like all the previous myths, is a reflection of the "truth" of existence.

How, then, to approach the myth, assuming that 'one starts with that damning premise of Lao-tse: the Tao that is the subject of discussion is not the true Tao'? In the only possible fashion: tangentially, in the mode of symbol. As Campbell points out, all the myths which have attempted to comment upon the metaphysical nature of existence have had common elements, no matter the culture from which they sprang. Durrell's method, then, is to use the old myths, including the Christian, to illustrate the new. The major myths -- of Tibet, Minoa,

Japan, Ethiopia, Mexico; of the primitive, the Occidental and the Oriental cultures -- are all of service.⁸⁵ Their common element, as Groddeck notes, is the physical trinity of man, woman and child.

The female element is the controlling factor in this trinity. In The Black Book, as in the later Alexandria Quartet, all of Durrell's women are aspects of the numenal and eternal "Woman". Hilda, the prostitute; Gracie, the tubercular girl whom Gregory marries; Old Fanny; Miss Smith; Dinah, Chamberlain's wife; the 'you' to whom a great deal of the novel is addressed -- all of these women finally transcend their particular identities and become "Woman". They become identified with the 'eternal female quality' and by extension with the women who have borne "gods". Hilda, for example, is directly compared to the Virgin Mary; Old Fanny to Aphrodite in the guise of Lady Godiva; while Miss Smith becomes the Danae, identified by her association with 'a sunlit man . . . pissing a solid stream of gold coins against a wall'.⁸⁶ The eternal maiden, fit to give birth to a manifestation of the deity, is present in each. As Groddeck points out,

Those who have learned that there is an eternal female quality, apart from its embodiment in any individual woman, will also know that in spite of any bodily experience, in spite

of love-affairs or even motherhood,
 this essence of womanhood is
 unchangeably virginal.⁸⁷

This point will be explored in greater detail in the discussion of the relationship with nature which follows. It is sufficient to note at this point that the female principle is the means of attaining 'the heraldic universe' in The Black Book. Just as Mickey Mouse is simply a caricature of mankind and not a threat to its essential humanity, so the parodies of womanhood which Chamberlain sings⁸⁸ are of no importance when compared to 'the great luminous symbol of the cunt, glowing in history like the Grail, the genesis of the living, the blithe plush cushion of life'.⁸⁹

The Relationship with Nature in The Black Book.

By the time of The Black Book, a number of things are evident regarding the view of nature which Durrell holds. Pied Piper of Lovers manifests what might be called man's symbiotic relationship to the natural world. Certainly Walsh Clifton as a child draws strength from the eucalyptus tree, and as a young man from both the sea and the countryside around Lyme Regis. The maternal aspect of the natural world, as trite as it is, is thus evident in the earliest novel, although the traditional

mythic relationship between nature and the feminine principle is perhaps overdone.

While symbiosis denotes the character of the relationship in Pied Piper, the key to the same relationship in Panic Spring is immersion. The feminine principle associated with the natural world in the first novel is strikingly absent in the second, both in the symbolic and in the mythic sense. The male world associated with the Pan figure would seem to dominate, and the preponderance of male characters tends to support this view. This is because the natural principle manifest in Panic Spring is not particularized in a symbol as it is in Pied Piper. Instead, it is the all-pervasive element which influences Marlowe as much as it does Rumanades or Christ. For the first time, Durrell is creating a 'landscape with literary figures' -- the specific landscape as it embodies nature in general is a more real character, perhaps, than those literary creations with which it is peopled.

In the first novel, the early prayers of the young boy indicate an awe of the natural world, and of its obviously abundant power, which is akin to primitive religion. The more "civilised" young man clearly begins to associate Ruth with the natural world and, while he

does not worship her, she does come to represent nature anthropomorphised in female form. In Panic Spring, the religious quality of the natural world closely parallels Goethe's view as indicated by his use of 'Gottnatur' rather than 'Gott' when referring to the deity. To state that Durrell had read Goethe in enough detail to realise this rather fine point is to speculate. But he had definitely read Groddeck, and Groddeck not only mentions Goethe's pointed differentiation, but stresses its importance.⁹⁰ Living within the natural world and accepting its fits of temper as well as its bounties thus becomes a religious act in itself. Attempting to re-order nature -- attempting to categorize the 'portentous pattern', as it were -- is an act of sacrilege, as Marlowe discovers. In short, happiness for the individual in Panic Spring is to be found in total immersion in the natural world and a giving over to its dictates.

In The Black Book, man's relationship to nature is presented as an amalgam of the relationships in Pied Piper and Panic Spring, with the whole being infinitely greater than the sum of its parts. The 'Gottnatur' concept certainly applies, specifically in its pantheistic sense. At the same time, however, the natural

forces are personified to some extent in each of the women in the novel.

For the first time, Durrell presents the view of landscape as palimpsest which he later developed in the island books. In short, history is only the tracing of man's willful attempts to assert the finite power of his ego on the infinite power of the natural world, and those tracings will ultimately be obliterated by nature itself. This theory is by no means new with Durrell; we might claim Gerard Manley Hopkins as but one antecedent, specifically as the theory is manifest in his "God's Grandeur". The reconciliation of the Christian deity with what had come to be called "pagan" concepts provoked a crisis, not only in Hopkins but in Charles Darwin. De Gourmont makes this clear in The Natural Philosophy of Love which, as we have seen, Durrell had definitely read before The Black Book was written. It is out of the nineteenth century crisis in religion, illuminated by both De Gourmont and Groddeck, that Durrell's view of man's relationship to nature in The Black Book naturally grows.⁹¹

This crisis is pointed up in two symbols which recur throughout the novel. The Zeitgeist of the twen-

tieth century is symbolised in the gigantic pulping machine to which everyone and everything is finally condemned. One particular passage makes this clear.

All this vast energy hangs behind [Lobo's] legendary voice; like some immense paper mill sucking in refuse, old strips of rag and street flotsam, the planet softens us all into scurf, mashes and flattens and gouges the unfeeling vessels into convenience, and then from the matrix produces and creates an endless roll of toilet paper, coupons, poppies, doilies, cartons, cellophane. "Why do we want to live?" [Lobo] asks nervously. He is thinking of the age I can see: the refuse going into the mill and being converted into the twentieth-century symbol of death.⁹²

Durrell rejects the mechanistic view, sometimes in sweeping metaphors, sometimes in veiled allusions such as the rejection of Marinetti and the Futurists in which, 'whirling down the scented country lanes in the car, Tarquin suddenly bellows: "Perhaps I need speed. More speed. I want to get the air in my lungs." And begins to cry out, "Faster, faster, faster," until Clare fills him to the gills with gin and puts the rug over him. Fulfillment!'⁹³

Tarquin is a very self-conscious homosexual, and Clare is his sometime bed-fellow. The connection of

sex and the mechanist view is made in another, different way with Lobo, who himself takes a mechanical view of the whole thing. The caricature of the "Latin lover", he speaks always of 'working' a woman. But Juanita, of whom he dreams constantly, he could never have. The mechanical lover is foiled completely in his final attempt to have sexual relations with his dream, characteristic and appropriately foiled in the same way that machinery can be stopped.

He was gaining on her, murderously exultant, almost in reach -- when suddenly she threw herself down like an animal, and gathering a handful of sand, scooped it full under the shabby dress; filled her cunt up with it, and lay exhausted . . . In the end he had to go away and leave her lying there as she was Speechless. Terrified. Victorious.⁹⁴

Over against the mechanistic view is set the view which is ultimately summed up in the statement, 'The verb "to fuck" has become synonymous with the verb "to be".⁹⁵ The Black Book, as noted previously, is peopled by a vast number of women, almost all of whom suffer from some complaint associated either with the spirit or with their generative function. Madame About, for example, like Auden's Miss Edith Gee, dies from uterine

cancer. The parallel with Auden's creation is striking, in all probability because both Durrell and Auden had read Groddeck. The latter's remarks about diseases of the female generative organs are enlightening, especially since Hilda the prostitute -- who serves a major symbolic and associative function in the novel -- contracts a disease which 'Lawrence Lucifer' associates with Madame About.⁹⁶ 'My own experience in cases of cancer,' Groddeck says, 'leads me to associate it with the personal attitude of the sufferer towards motherhood.

We know that cancer in women is most commonly found in sites essential to the growth and nourishment of the child, the uterus and the breast, and it is no great leap to the idea that the child-mother situation may be a possible mental factor in determining the disease.

It would seem as though in the veins of European life to-day a tragic conflict between natural morality and conventional codes of behaviour were working like a secret poison, for almost without exception the modern woman dreads being the victim of cancer.⁹⁷

The other disease of importance in The Black Book, although not one which is peculiar to women, is tuberculosis. The symbolic association of the breath and the

spirit is the key to the importance of the disease in this novel as well as in Cefalu[^] and The Alexandria Quartet. Durrell tends to be extremely associative in his working out of symbols, and this is particularly true of his use of the tubercular prostitute, of whom Gracie is the first in a series.

For Groddeck, the prostitute is as much a virgin as the true virgin herself. In all respects, each woman embodies the regenerative principle which is eternally chaste. The section in which 'Lawrence Lucifer' speculates on the possibility of the Virgin Mary having actually been a prostitute is not at all sacrilegious, and we may discount the possibility of Hilda being essentially different from the Virgin. With his parallelling of two such traditionally glaring opposites, Durrell simply provides the clearest possible hint as to the function of the women in the novel.

There is another interesting parallel between Auden's "Let Me Tell You A Little Story" and the women of The Black Book. Auden wrote his poem to the tune of "St. James' Infirmary", the blues classic about the New Orleans pimp who goes to the venereal disease clinic to see the prostitute for whom he has been pandering. The

irony in Auden setting his story of an English spinster to this tune is clear. But there is a similar irony in Durrell's sentence, 'These downtown women remind me of you'.⁹⁸ This sentence is a composite of lines from "Tell Old Bill" and "These Foolish Things", the first a traditional blues song warning 'Old Bill' away from prostitutes, and the second a sentimental popular ballad of the period. The importance of the sentence lies in the context of the lines which precede it, and the fact that it provides a major clue to the 'you' apostrophised in the novel.

The first edition of the novel contained a "Coda: To Nancy" which did not appear in the subsequent editions. The "Coda" formed the last few pages of the original edition, and would indicate that the 'you' to whom much of the meditative material in the novel is addressed was Durrell's first wife, Nancy Myers. On one level, this is undoubtedly true. But in the light of what we have said about every woman in the novel embodying the eternal feminine principle, another, more symbolic reference becomes clear. The preceding lines referred to above indicate that this is the case.

Or else at night, in the open car,
under the milky brilliance of the

sky, confess my sins and ponder
on the Logos with the precocity
of adolescent despair. I have the
sensation of dying, from the
roots of the toes upward, being
consumed like the asphodels after
a late season. These downtown
women remind me of you.⁹⁹

These lines contain five distinct references, all of which Durrell has combined in an effective statement through the associative principle mentioned above.

These references are to: (1) expiation of guilt through confession; (2) concern with the ordering principle of the cosmos; (3) association of the individual with nature in a way which recalls the symbiosis of Pied Piper, but with a further metaphysical overtone; (4) the prostitutes ('downtown women') mentioned above; and (5) the enigmatic 'you' of the novel. The reference to 'confession' immediately imparts a religious overtone to the passage. Associated primarily with Roman Catholicism, the reference implies the concepts of the Roman Catholic Church which, later, will be tied specifically to the Virgin Mary. 'Ponder on the Logos' contains both pre-Christian and Christian elements, in that Heraclitus as well as the Church Fathers employed this term. There is a third, internal element of which the reader may be unaware, however. This is the reference which Gregory

makes in the 'diary' to his meeting with Kate, the woman who ultimately becomes his "retreat".

In Bournemouth, walking the streets, while the rain pronged the lights and houses, the whole shape of my future rose up and choked me. In the municipal library I found myself all of a sudden sitting with a book on oceanography open in front of me. I was looking for the Logos. The face of the squid attracted me. Later, in a cozy little bar-parlor the face of Kate was the face of the same squid I had seen on the title page of the tome.¹⁰⁰

The clear association of Kate with the Logos in Gregory's mind is through the association of Kate with the squid. This parallels the association of Hilda the prostitute with the whale and, by extension, leads to an association of the Logos and the 'downtown women' of the final sentence. Considering the previous comments on the prostitute as embodying the feminine principle, taken in conjunction with the traditional view of the generative process of the female being a symbolic embodiment of the natural process and hence a symbol of the inherent natural forces, the association of the male with the natural world in the second sentence becomes clear. Thus the natural world with which 'Lawrence Lucifer' associates on a personal basis in sentence two is linked both to the

Logos which he ponders and to the 'downtown women' of the final sentence.

The Renaissance view of man as the microcosmos which reflects the macrocosmic universe informs the association between man and nature implicit in sentence two above. Two of the views concomitant to the Renaissance outlook were the anthropocentricity of the universe and its microcosmic counterpart, the egocentricity of the individual. Man's view of his paramount place in nature, and the consequent view of nature as subservient to man, ultimately led to a divorce between man and nature later reflected in the Prospero figure of Shakespeare's The Tempest, a figure with whom Durrell clearly associates himself in "Cities, Plains and People". But the Prospero of Durrell's poem is the Prospero of the end of the play, who has abnegated his power over the natural forces in favour of his own, inherent power. This fits with the view of the individual's place in the natural pattern which is presented in The Black Book: egocentricity and the consequent exertion of the individual human will is a target in the novel; the Renaissance view is not advocated but denied by Durrell, and another view of man's place in nature must be put forward.

The Renaissance view is thus important to the argument because Durrell denies it. Instead, he advocates "immersion" -- the giving over to the natural pattern instead of the exertion of the will. 'For my own part,' he states, 'I am falling into an utter anonymity. I accept everything and examine nothing.'¹⁰¹

What is all this misery beside the
misery of the hills, the immense
agony of the rain, the thaw, the
new fruit buried in the earth?
There is a spirit outside us all
which is affecting me, inciting me
to join its poignance, its suffering.
I do not know what to call it.¹⁰²

The identification of the male narrator with the natural world, combined with his personification throughout the novel as Christ, is informative. There are also broad hints that he is to be associated as well with, among others, Dionysus and Adonis. In this latter role he becomes the male consort of the feminine principle embodied in Demeter, Isis and the Virgin Mary. There are numerous references to this idea, both in pre-Christian and Christian terms, throughout the novel. But he is not the god per se. Rather, he is the initiate in search of knowledge, of the 'dim gnosis' which he perceives as existing beyond the phenomenal world.¹⁰³ The tradition of initiation into the "myster-

ies" informs this view. Ultimately, the narrator is experiencing palingenesis, and G. B. Gardner's remarks are informative in this context.

Only those deities who, owing to their own mythical history, bore within themselves the elements of new birth, Demeter, Dionysus, Isis, Atys and Adonis, could confer palingenesis, the identification of the self with the divinity . .
 . .104

It remains, however, that the male narrator, having experienced palingenesis, is the consort of the female principle embodied in a goddess such as Demeter, Isis, or some other representation of the Earth Mother. The major references in the novel are to Ishtar, the Babylonian counterpart of the Egyptian Isis. Durrell had surely read Frazer's The Golden Bough, considering its vogue in the period, and Frazer describes Ishtar as 'the great mother goddess, the embodiment of the reproductive energies of nature'.¹⁰⁵ His reference to the yearly death of Tammuz and the tradition 'that every year his divine mistress journeyed in quest of him "to the land from which there is no returning, to the house of darkness, where dust lies on door and bolt"' is paralleled in numerous places in the novel. The two passages which follow illustrate both the major and the

minor allusions to the myth.

"Dear Puck," you say, "everything is altered now with the first spring things, the first delicate flowers. Everywhere there are delicate arteries thawing, and the earth turns over on her side to let the seeds wake in her. The cottage lies quietly in the shoulder of the hill, under the discipline of night and day. When do we meet?"

I am reminded of Ishtar going down every year into the territories underground, the atmosphere of dust and ashes and silence; and the slow vegetative revival of life, the corn springing from the navel of Osiris. The rain dazzling on the enormous eyelashes of April. The English Seasons, so nostalgic in death, cherishing their decay in heavy loam and delicate rain! It is something unknown. Spring under the ledge of the Ionian weather, that is the image which has swallowed the cottage, the April, the drizzle among the corn106

There is Eustace [Honeywoods], going down, as he says, "into the valley of the shadow" as his wife has her fourth [child].107

The enigmatic 'you', then, is the personified natural forces traditionally embodied in such figures as Demeter, Isis and Ishtar. She may well be personified in Nancy, as the presence of the "Coda" in the first edition would indicate. She may also be personified in Durrell's own mother, however. The above letter to

'Puck', and another addressed to him,¹⁰⁸ might have come from Mrs. Durrell, as Durrell preceded the rest of the family to Corfu and the 'When do we meet?' would be a logical question in that case. Considering the diarist of the novel as 'Lawrence Lucifer's' alter ego, Gregory's association of his mother with the 'Mother of God, Mother of Misery, Mother of Jesus, Mother of Man. Aphrodite on the rolling brown horse, triumphant, with the menstrual blood flowing in a wave to her ankles',¹⁰⁹ could be said to corroborate this view. Whether or not the latter thesis is anything more than highly argumentative speculation would be difficult to prove. The fact remains that the 'you' to whom much of the novel is addressed is the eternal feminine principle, and the male narrator who calls himself 'Lawrence Lucifer' is indisputably the consort (if not the husband) of that female.

That this is the case is easy to prove. Take, for example, 'Lawrence Lucifer's' "will", in which he bequeaths his body to the earth. The terms of that "will" are interesting.

Imprimis, I Lawrence Lucifer bequeath my soul to hell and my body to the earth among you all. Divide me and share me equally, but with as much wrangling as you can, I pray.¹¹⁰

The rending of the body of Dionysus is surely intended here. Further, the narrator's sexual relationship with the natural world embodied in the 'you' is quite clear. There are numerous passages in which this occurs; the following is but one.

And then there is you. You wait behind the faces and the signs which puzzle. A pale hieroglyph scribbled across these pages, across these faces, these whales, symbols, ideographs. You speak to me from the trees with the spirit of trees: the delicate human bark of the Eucalyptus, you are living among your green sickles. In bed it is a tree that grows upward from the scrotum, choking me, stuffing soft tentacles and flowers into my arms, into my throat, into my knees. I am a scarecrow filled by the trees which grow upward through me. When I speak of you my throat is lined like bark, and my tongue is soft rotten juniper-loam, cloying.

I cover you with my body and whole universes open silently for me, like a door into a sudden garden. 111

The relationship of the narrator to nature is thus symbolised and particularised in the sexual act. The dissolution of the ego in palingenesis -- the union with the cosmic "One" -- is also involved here, and the act of coitus thus becomes a form of worship. This concept is taken to its logical conclusion in the symbol of the female body as cathedral. Worship and coitus thus

become synonymous, as in the description of 'Perez cherishing his clubbed penis, and handing it casually to Hilda, as one might give up one's ticket at the terminus. Without a sigh or a word handing up his ticket and entering the cathedral on his knees'.¹¹²

The direct correspondence between the natural world and the spiritual one is made eminently clear early in The Black Book. In the opening pages 'Lawrence Lucifer' states emphatically that 'we share that correspondence of death with the season'.¹¹³ Later references continue the theme; for example, 'it seems to me that this winter is not something on which one can lock doors. It does not exist only on the painted tradesmen's cards, but in the individual himself, in the very bones of the protagonist'.¹¹⁴ The sickness of the natural world is manifested in the sickness of Gracie (tuberculosis) and in that of Madame About and Hilda (uterine cancer). This is again quite clear in two specific references, the first to an individual, the second to the landscape.

Remote as the moon craters, the
plumes of sunspot, I can only
tell you that your fertility is
going bad while you sit there
smoking, or reading the paper
. . . .¹¹⁵

If the spring ever breaks in this district it is with an air of surprised green. A momentous few weeks of fruition in which the little unwary things come out in their defenseless, naive way. The soot and the metal paralysis soon eat them. The canker of steel rusting slowly in the virginity of the rose.¹¹⁶

Just as the landscape of England suffers from diseases specifically associated with the regenerative powers embodied in it, so the characters in the novel suffer in correspondence. Thus the equation of man with nature is carried through in the novel.

The "immersion" in the natural world which is advocated in The Black Book is symbolised in the coital act, as stated above. The "return to the womb" by the male narrator is, however, impossible. For it is Hilda's womb in which he plans to take up residence for eternity¹¹⁷ -- and Hilda contracts uterine cancer. So the "escape" from the sickness of England must be to a landscape more propitious to his desired end, and the Ionian landscape of Corfu totally replaces the 'English Seasons'.¹¹⁸ 'Lawrence Lucifer' transcends the symbolic for the real.

Thus the pantheism of Pied Piper of Lovers and the

"immersion" of Panic Spring have found their logical end in the amalgamated view presented in the third novel of the trilogy. An early response to The Black Book from Henry Miller makes the point of the novel eminently clear, and serves as a suitable ending to this discussion of the relationship with nature advocated in the novel.

The theme [of the novel] is death and rebirth, the Dionysian theme which I predicted in the Lawrence book must be the theme for the writers to come -- the only theme permissible or possible.¹¹⁹

[David] Edgar would have it that you have performed the astounding feat of following the schizophrenic trend to its logical, consummate solution, that instead of the retrogressive neurotic swing back to the womb -- womb being the unattainable, the Paradise of the Ideal, the Godhood business -- you have expanded the womb-feeling until it includes the whole universe. All is womb, hence you are constantly with God.

But the process of transformation, metamorphosis, symbolization, if you will, is this same return to the womb tendency, only in reverse. You die out completely, as you did in your book, in order to achieve a life on a thoroughly new plane. This is so clear in your book, so exhaustively and definitively written out, that it makes one dance inside to follow you.¹²⁰

* * *

As well as being an amalgam of the views on man's

relationship with nature presented in Pied Piper of Lovers and Panic Spring, The Black Book also includes material from the early novels. This material indicates that Durrell was aware of the relationship of the third novel with its predecessors. Alan G. Thomas, queried about that relationship, replied,

I agree with you that Pied Piper and The Black Book, together with Panic Spring, do form a sort of trilogy in that they represent a new and original writer working his way towards his own and personal form of expression.¹²¹

True enough -- but that is not the sort of trilogy this writer had in mind.

It might be objected at this point that, rather than being involved with a trilogy as such, we are faced with one novel which Durrell clearly felt was his first true book,¹²² and that those passages in The Black Book which echo the previous novels simply appear because he wanted to condense his life into one novel. That is, they appear quite fortuitously, and are not intended to form any kind of "summary" tying the three novels together. This would be quite defensible if it were not for the details from Pied Piper and Panic Spring which were discussed in Chapters One and Two of this thesis and which appear in the third novel.

Toward the end of The Black Book, the following lengthy passage appears.

Let us walk quietly in the declension of the season, smoke a pipe over the gate, take note of how the asphodels are doing. In the little house run over the accounts, select a book, doze over the fire, or at bedtime light the candles and start the piano hymning. It is all the same, for this is a piece out of another book. It is significant merely because Tarquin is mentioned. Over the fire and the crusader's hearth, in the smoke of pipes, Tarquin is mentioned. It is a strange immortality to be consummated here, in this cottage, drowned in flowers, under the glimmering bottoms of the books. I record it now merely to reassure myself that we are never forgotten.¹²³

This passage directly echoes that portion of the "Walsh" chapter of Panic Spring in which Clifton's later relationship with Ruth is discussed, and in which Tarquin is indeed mentioned. That is:

Walsh would go instead for a walk, dropping in on his way home at Tarquin's cottage. Tarquin was the schoolmaster.

Sitting in the threadbare arm-chair, puffing his pipe, he would be again amazed at the huge, bald, gentle cranium of his host; the twists of silver at his ears. The mild eyes, almost olive-purple, with their fine lashes.

Tarquin was interesting because he

was a splendid medium: through him one could reach history. No, it was more than that, for Tarquin was history. The perfect refugee to whom any age was more immediately accessible than his own, he lived between the fireside and the long shelves of dusty books which fed his insatiable taste for the living death.¹²⁴

The parallels between these two passages are too obvious to be called fortuitous, even granting Durrell's admission that Tarquin is a libellous character, and considering that the surroundings of Tarquin's "original" could therefore be readily reproduced at will and would therefore always be similar. The Tarquin of The Black Book does appear in Panic Spring as a memory character, and the passage from the third novel quoted above stipulates that 'this is a piece out of another book'.

The situation of direct correspondences between the novels is not as directly stated in the relationship between Pied Piper and The Black Book as it is in the relationship explored above. When dealing with Pied Piper, we must keep in mind Durrell's lament for his birthplace, on the one hand,¹²⁵ and on the other, Groddeck's remark that, as he sees man,

he is forever striving towards some blissful state which is what he was and what he had in infancy¹²⁶

There are many references to Tibet or to India in The Black Book. Most have symbolic significance, and will be discussed later in this chapter. Three specific references, however, echo Pied Piper of Lovers quite unmistakably.

The earliest reference is interesting because of the precise details from the first novel which appear.

Letters with Indian stamps on them,
Halma, Ludo, Baedeker, Old Moore,
dripping, sequel, the green house lit
with a green rain from heaven, the
haggard fingers stitching a winding
cloth for the morning¹²⁷

The 'green house lit with a green rain from heaven' is definitely 'the house . . . called "Emerald Hall"' to which Walsh Clifton moves from Burma in Book One of Pied Piper. The 'haggard fingers stitching a winding cloth for the morning' are the fingers of the old woman doctor who, together with an Indian servant, 'crossed the room to the bedside and started to sew a blanket about the body' of Clifton's mother the morning after his birth.¹²⁹

The next clear reference to the first novel, too long to quote here, contains numerous correspondences which would have to be picked out page by page and would

become tedious.¹³⁰ It is a general reminiscence, virtually a resumé of the sights and sounds of the Indian hill country described in Book One of Pied Piper. The opening sentence is significant, however, in the light of the statement from Groddeck quoted above.

When the drums begin, and the opaque
lightning trembles in the night sky,
I become a child again, in revisited
history.

Thus there are clear echoes in The Black Book from both of the earlier novels, echoes which, in their detail, cannot merely be accidental. They serve to bind together the unacknowledged early trilogy.

The final clear reference to Pied Piper of Lovers, a continuation to some extent of the second example given above, also provides a firm basis for the discussion of the theme of Tibet as "paradise" which recurs throughout the novel.

Tibet hangs like a sphinx over the
revisited childhood which my dreams
offer me: the craters crammed with
jewelry; the hills curving up into
their vertiginous flowers of snow;
the dawn opening like a coral
umbrella on Lhasa; the yak and
the black bear the only visitors
of that immense vista in time; the
monasteries as remote as stars on
the hills; everything has fallen

upon me in this stuffy English room
with a pathos that is beyond ink.¹³¹

The pre-exile state of 'Lawrence Lucifer' was as pathetic as that of Walsh Clifton in the latter part of Pied Piper, or of Christian Marlowe before he left England in Panic Spring. All three of Durrell's personae in the trilogy experience a yearning to be free of England, although only 'Lawrence Lucifer' identifies the malaise with which they are all afflicted.

Pied Piper of Lovers is the novel to which the other two must ultimately refer, for Clifton/Durrell's memories of his childhood are the memories of what Groddeck calls that 'blissful state which is what he was and what he had in infancy' towards which man 'is forever striving'. In Freud's terms, these persona all wish to return to the womb -- and Durrell very conveniently identifies his 'back-to-the-womber's allegory' for us in The Black Book.¹³² But Gregory metaphorically takes up residence in Kate's womb and is never heard from again, while 'Lawrence Lucifer' is kept away from Hilda by uterine cancer. Surely Miller is correct when he tells Durrell, 'you have expanded the womb-feeling until it includes the whole universe'? Tibet exemplifies the womb in the novel -- and the Tibet of The Black Book is the Mavrodaphne of

Panic Spring, which we associated in Chapter Two with the "Islands of the Blessed".

The 'blissful state', quite apart from any metaphysical connotation, is the paradisaal one. And the journey in which the protagonist is involved in the latter stages of the novel is always towards the 'inaccessible absolute' embodied in Tibet.

This is the theme of travel whether the towns whirl by me under the moon, or whether I am at my deal desk in the Commercial School. Thule, ultima Thule. There is a stepping-off place -- a little Tibetan village, stuck like a springboard in the side of the mountains. There are no friends to see us off: our banners, our catchwords, our heroism -- these things are not understood here. The natives have other criteria. Beyond us the passes open like flowers in the setting sun, the delicate gates of the unknown country's body, the Yoni of the world, luteous, luteous, unbearably lonely. Is the journey plural or am I alone? It is a question only to be answered at the outposts.

This is the great beginning I planned for so long.¹³³

This passage condenses two views of Tibet presented in The Black Book which, in terms of the novel as a whole, are complementary. The paradisaal nature of Tibet referred to above is mirrored in its correspondence to Ultima

Thule, which in turn relates it to the "Islands of the Blessed". The relationship between paradisaal islands which traditionally existed far to the west and a mountain kingdom far to the east is explained in 'Lawrence Lucifer's' reference to the journey as similar to 'the divine drama . . . of the canary setting out like Columbus every ten minutes and ending like Sir Walter Raleigh. The adventure of the ship, like a wooden body, and the spiritual adventure in the tower.'¹³⁴

The second view is that of Tibet as 'the Yoni of the world'. This concept is tied directly to the importance of the female as personifying the natural forces through the following passage.

The great luminous symbol of the cunt, glowing softly in history like the Grail, the genesis of the living, the blithe plush cushion of life. Hilda lying there like Tibet, glowing in her convalescent secrecy among the snow-bound craters and jewels.¹³⁵

The connection between the female body and religion discussed above is here extended in the light of Groddeck's remarks on man's desire to return to the 'blissful state' of childhood. The 'sudden garden' which 'Lawrence Lucifer' enters during coitus with the 'you' of the novel is precisely the pure, idyllic paradise symbolised in the

Christian myth as the "Garden of Eden". The similarity drawn between the vagina as symbol and the Grail tradition enforces this concept. Durrell could not have been unaware of the work of the Cambridge School of Anthropologists, and T. S. Eliot's footnoting of Jessie L. Weston's From Ritual to Romance in The Waste Land would have sent him to the source of the similarity drawn above. Miss Weston's tracing of the Grail legend from the vegetation rites to its presence in the Christian literature of Western Europe is the key here. The view of the feminine principle as religious concept is, as we have seen, tied to the physitheism of the Near East and, based on Miss Weston's thesis, 'the great luminous symbol of the cunt, glowing softly in history like the Grail,' follows naturally in The Black Book.

This view leads into two further associations with Tibet in the novel. The first is the association of Tibet with 'the living myth'.

When I think of Tibet lying out there among the snow craters, the Golgotha of the dead races, Minoa, Japan opening like the tail of a peacock, or Ethiopia where the lanterns swing darkly over pools of blood -- then I know that the myth which hangs so heavily on us is not dead. It is coming back slowly into focus, its

power is being restored; wherever we move we knock against its shapes -- permeations and diffusions so vast that there is not a square foot of earth without its compulsive magic.¹³⁶

'The living myth' to which Durrell is referring is the ancient myth of the vegetation deity, specifically the feminine principle embodied in Ishtar, Isis and Demeter. Tarquin's proposed novel on the life of a female Christ¹³⁷ adds some weight to the concept, especially when compared with the view of 'Jesus [as] a damp scrotum which has lain for two thousand years on the butcher's slab, under the knife'. 'The Christ we have made,' says 'Lawrence Lucifer', 'is a fish: a pale intellectual parasite who has gnawed our livers for an aeon.'¹³⁸ Thus Durrell's 'new myth' is the old myth of the natural forces, revived.

The second association is that of Tibet as the 'stepping-off place' on the last stage of 'the journey'. There is a definite parallel here between the journey of the protagonist and the Grail quest. Considering the view of Christ given above, we may safely assume that that aspect of the Grail quest with which we are concerned is the one associated with the religious rites in honour of the vegetation deity. In other words, Durrell has

adapted the legend of the Fisher King discussed by Miss Weston to suit his own purposes in the novel. In the first place, the landscape of England is definitely sick, and its inhabitants are similarly afflicted. But if 'Lawrence Lucifer' is the questor, who (or what) is the Fisher King? 'I am not concerned,' he says, 'with the Benthos, the mud eaters, shit gobblers, and their brood. We must concentrate only on those who have a chance of being saved.'¹³⁹ But those who are saved are those who have become so through introspection and the denial of the ego. And this means a thoroughly personal approach to the problem. There is no sure means of finding the true direction toward salvation; there is no compass or even compass-heading which the initiated may receive. Significantly, 'Lawrence Lucifer' will begin his journey 'on the first fine day of spring'.

May will find me scudding southward
under the trades, in the direction
of the quest -- perhaps in the wrong
direction. There is only trial and
error on a journey like this, and
no signposts. The end is somewhere
beyond even Ethiopia or Tibet: the
land where God is a yellow man, an
old philosopher brooding over his
swanpan.¹⁴⁰

His highly personal philosophy is here embodied in Lao-tse, who is the 'old philosopher', the 'yellow man' to whom

Durrell refers. The "Way" or "Path" of Taoism is the reference made here, for enlightenment is as personal a thing for one who reaches 'the heraldic universe' as it is for he who achieves union with "the One". So 'Lawrence Lucifer' is both questor and Fisher King and, in his own terms, Durrell has become, by the end of The Black Book, 'an old bun-nosed Tibetan feeding the wild swans under the Greek Islands'.¹⁴¹

G. B. Gardner suggests a parallel between the Grail quest legends and the reincarnation cycle which was discussed earlier in relation to 'the heraldic universe'.

Many writers say that the journey to the Grail Castle really depicted the journey of the soul through the Underworld to reach Paradise Now this secret castle was said to be in a far land To reach it you had to undergo trials or to ask certain questions, know certain secrets and secret words (passwords); in other words, "initiation" into a more or less secret society¹⁴²

He also suggests that there exist quite explicit similarities between the "mysteries" of witchcraft and the Greater and Lesser Mysteries of Eleusis and Agrai.¹⁴³ While Gardner is viewing the Grail's relationship with the "mysteries" from the standpoint of an initiated member of a coven, this point is nonetheless significant to our

discussion. For the well-known writers and philosophers of the pre-Christian era who were initiates of some form of the "mysteries" include Herodotus, Plotinus, Apuleius and Plato, all of whom referred to 'the secrets' in veiled terms.¹⁴⁴

A reasonable assumption may then be made regarding Plato's theory of metempsychosis as illustrated earlier in the discussion between Socrates and Cebes in The Phaedo.¹⁴⁵ Couched in metaphysical terms, the theory is that of the life-death-rebirth principle of nature which was deified in Zagreus in the Orphic rites at Agrai, and in Demeter and Korè (Persephone) at Eleusis. The qualitative parallel drawn earlier between Platonic metempsychosis and the principles taught in the Bardo Thödol still obtains. The latter merely places more emphasis on the spiritual aspect of rebirth. There is, however, yet a third parallel which is also qualitative. This is The Egyptian Book of the Dead, in which Anubis, the jackal-headed lord of the Underworld, weighs or evaluates the souls of the dead. Alan G. Thomas states that one early title which Durrell considered for The Black Book was 'Lover Anubis',¹⁴⁶ which implies that Durrell was making a surface parallel between the Egyptian religion, based on the worship of the natural

forces embodied in Isis and Osiris, and the Eleusinian Mysteries, based on the Demeter-Persephone myth. All three of these religions entailed both reincarnation and a concept of a "paradise" which we have earlier associated with Durrell's 'heraldic universe'. The 'Platonic poison' which Tarquin tells 'Lawrence Lucifer' to get out of his system is precisely the concept of metempsychosis which Socrates taught. Considering that the surname of Durrell's persona in the novel, along with numerous references to Christ and Christianity throughout, brings in the state religion of the England he was rejecting, we can see that Durrell has carried his system through in his search to revive the old myth of the regenerative cycle in nature.

We have referred to this concept as "pantheism", both in Chapter One and earlier in this chapter. In fact, the correct word is "physitheism". "Panthéism" implies a removed deity whose presence is made manifest in the world around. "Physitheism", on the other hand, is the worship of the natural forces personified in a deity. This difference is significant, for it changes the whole view of man's relationship with nature as presented in the early trilogy. It also explains the

view of modern physics which Durrell puts forward in the novel, a view well in keeping with his rejection of the mechanical Zeitgeist of the age.

"Physis" quite simply means "nature", and "physics" is therefore "the study of nature, or of the natural world". But "physics", for Durrell, had somewhere miscarried, for it had produced the 'pulping machine' which he felt was recreating or reincarnating everything and everyone as 'an endless roll of toilet paper, coupons, poppies, doilies' which he felt were 'the twentieth-century symbol of death'.¹⁴⁷ The gross disparity between "physis" and what should have been but never was a metaphysical science is pointed up quite clearly in the following passage.

"The physical world now," says Tarquin, weighing his scrotum gravely in his right hand. "Take the physical world for instance." He is gravely weighing the physical world in his right hand. Very well, then. Let us take the physical world, There is no charge. We confront that abject specimen, the modern physicist, and discover the shabby circus animal he owns, hidden away in the darker recesses of the metaphysical cage. A lousy, dejected, constipated American lion without so much as a healthy fart left in it.¹⁴⁸

In terms of the physitheism which provides the basis both

for the myth and for Durrell's 'heraldic universe', this is the last and most damning comment on the twentieth century in the novel.

We must return to David Edgar's remarks about The Black Book in order to properly approach the concept of "immersion" as it applies to the proposed dissolution of the ego in the novel.

Edgar would have it that you have performed the astounding feat of following the schizophrenic trend to its logical, consummate solution, that instead of the retrogressive neurotic swing back to the womb . . . you have expanded the womb feeling until it includes the whole universe.¹⁴⁹

In his "Introduction" to The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud, A. A. Brill states that, 'in psychosis . . . , [schizophrenia] results from a conflict between the ego and the outer world'.¹⁵⁰ The conflict cannot easily be resolved, as Freud recognised and Groddeck affirmed, because the inherent propensity of man is to assert his ego. This point was touched upon earlier in our discussions of the place of the individual in the natural pattern, and of the concept of palingenesis as it applies in the novel.¹⁵¹

Edgar's view does indicate the position of the ego

by the end of The Black Book, however. The problem of the ego is presented through the reflections of 'Lawrence Lucifer' and of his alter ego, Herbert 'Death' Gregory. Their solutions are directly opposed, but the terminology of the problem which Gregory calls 'the eternal abhorrent presence of oneself' is constant.¹⁵² In Gregory's view, 'To be or not to be has been the question for too long. I am determined to answer it in the negative.'¹⁵³ 'Lawrence Lucifer', on the other hand, says, 'I shall not choose as Gregory chose. To be or not to be. The question has been decided.'¹⁵⁴ The terminology is obvious and, to eliminate lengthy reference during this discussion, we will refer to the problem as "the Hamlet question".

Durrell indicated to Miller in November, 1936 that he saw definite parallels between the material of Shakespeare's Hamlet and twentieth century England. 'The tragedy of Hamlet,' he says, 'was the tragedy of the Elizabethan Age, the age which poisoned its young men with the humanities and showed them none. It is the tragedy of England now, but more advanced, more grey and carious than ever.'¹⁵⁵ George Wickes points out that, 'as "Hamlet, Prince of China", Durrell's second Hamlet

letter [was] published in Delta two years later, with only minor changes, almost as it rolled off the machine.'¹⁵⁶ Wickes should have said, 'almost as it rolled off the machine when Durrell rewrote it for publication', for the additions are of major significance.¹⁵⁷ For Durrell, "the Hamlet question" involves the sloughing off of all the acquired cultural traits which prejudice the action of the individual. Hamlet's problem as epitomised in the 'To be or not to be' musing is the problem of action as it defines self. In other words, Hamlet must decide 'to be' the Prince of Denmark and avenge his father's murder -- thus fulfilling society's expectations by conceding to the pressures of his culture. Or, he can decide 'not to be' the Prince, with the concomitant results. The latter decision was for Durrell the ideal one.

Two passages make this clear. In "Hamlet, Prince of China", Durrell tells Miller,

I should read Hamlet again -- because you have the idea that it is purely a drama of the ideal. But there is more to it. Subtract the ideal and you have the framework of your own struggle, stated terribly. The ideal is secondary -- though it is the main thing that disfigures Shaxpeer, all Englishmen really. (Englishmen have always been,

in spite of the national anthem, slaves.) It is this lie which I want to tackle myself in England. Shax made a complete statement of it, but died from it.¹⁵⁸

'Death' Gregory suffered Shakespeare's fate, for he states in the 'diary' that he has been 'destroyed by the problem of personal action'.¹⁵⁹ Durrell's first 'Hamlet letter' to Miller (November, 1936) prefigures the second in that it specifies the problem more exactly.

There are two Hamlets. We are presented with the Prince of Denmark, and it's only through the chinks in his armour that we can see the inner man, the worm turning in the bowels of compassion, etc. But as the play goes on, the inner Hamlet, no longer Prince, grows and begins to strip his fellow characters of their masks. The great shock is to find himself alone in life, with no contact, not even with that sweet but silly little wretch Ophelia. Then, realising that he should really turn away from these fakes to his real self, he feels the pressure of society suddenly on him. He is forced to be the Prince, however much his private Hamlet suffers.

But for you, I shouldn't bother to read Hamlet except for the poetry. Its doubts and grimaces you have already solved for yourself. But by God, Shakespeare was on the point of solving it more than once. But

he failed, so Hamlet failed. There was nothing left but the stagnant end, the conventional Elizabethan pogrom, and a brief but witty epitaph.¹⁶⁰

'Lawrence Lucifer' becomes more and more of the opinion as The Black Book progresses that 'the modern disease' is 'every day more accurately portrayed by Hamlet'.¹⁶¹ The conflict which Durrell finds between the inner and outer Hamlets is, as we have stated, the conflict between the individual and his culture. But Gregory suffers the fate of Hamlet: that is, he must die at the end of the little drama which is his own 'black book'. Following Brill, we may say that both Hamlet and Gregory are schizophrenic in the psychotic sense. As Gregory puts it, 'My disease is egocentric, and therefore mortal.'¹⁶² Stated simply, then, "the Hamlet question" is one of schizophrenia: the individual must solve the conflict which exists between his ego and the outer world.

For 'Lawrence Lucifer', the solution to the problem is exile. 'Gregory I admire,' he says, 'though I do not understand him so well.'

His choice was the trap, because he could not stand the stratosphere. Chamberlain would like to take his own cage with him, and pitch it in the deserted stratosphere of life.

He is nothing but a spiritual colonizer, to whom the wilderness is intolerable until it is cultivated, pruned, transformed into a replica of home. He does not respect its own positive laws. He would transplant his own. To such a man there is no meaning in the word "exile". He will never be an inhabitant of that private pandemonium which Gregory peeped into once before closing the lid.¹⁶³

In terms of 'the heraldic universe', however, exile need not mean the presence of schizophrenia for the individual. In the light of the preceding remarks on union with the natural world as the solution to the retrogressive schizophrenic trend, we can see that 'Lawrence Lucifer' has avoided a conflict between his ego and the outer world by immersing himself in the landscape and thereby dissolving his ego.

The symbolism involved with this trend in the novel becomes obvious only through a consideration of those who failed to solve "the Hamlet question", and, of these, Gregory is the chief. The 'trap' which Gregory chose was the cultural one, symbolised in the hive of the 'white ant' or giant termite.¹⁶⁴ Now Gregory's disease is described in three primary ways in the novel, two of which have already been referred to: 'the problem of personal action'; 'egocentric'; and 'the disease of

the dwarf'.¹⁶⁵ The last category is an interesting one, for it leads to an explanation of the way in which the immersion of the individual and the dissolution of the ego in the natural world are symbolised in the novel. 'My disease is the disease of the dwarf,' Gregory says.

To make myself plausible I am forced into a sort of self-magnification of action, of thought. I am forced to make myself transcend reality.¹⁶⁶

The 'disease of the dwarf' is the disease of the ego. And the disease of the ego is the disease of the penis, 'the little I' which experiences 'the little death', only to rise resurrected once again.

The dissolution of the ego, however, is to be found in relation to the natural world. As Groddeck puts it,

People who accuse Freud and myself of reducing everything to sex would do well to ponder these things. It is not we who magnify the importance of the single genital function, but they who limit sexuality to that alone

Of itself our teaching has not the least concern with erotics; we would merely say, "See how great the world is, and how small that tiny thing which seems to you so important. Look around you. The little bit of pleasure which sexuality gives you you can find everywhere. The world is soaked with it."¹⁶⁷

The ubiquitous sexuality of nature is, as we know, sym-

bolised in the eternal feminine principle and typified in every woman. This is Groddeck's major emphasis in all his writings. The emphasis on the penis constitutes an error, according to Groddeck's system, purely on the basis that the power of the male symbolised in the erect member is only transitory.¹⁶⁸ Thus we have the logic of Groddeck's favourite quotation as it applied to the penis and the ego which it symbolises: 'Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichness', all that is mortal is but a symbol. And the immersion of self, the dissolution of the ego, is symbolised in the coital act. So Perez, 'handing up his ticket and entering the cathedral on his knees',¹⁶⁹ typifies the solution to "the Hamlet question" in The Black Book.

"Love", in this context, becomes asexual. The difficulty with language as a precise medium for communication discussed earlier in this chapter is directly connected with the use of the word. Gregory makes this clear early in the novel. 'There should be another word to express this very real state,' he says. 'One hardly knows how to do it without the key word to the situation. Let me leave a blank space and proceed.' A few pages later, he firmly dissociates himself from the question of "love" and its use. He has 'signaled [his] ignorance

by a blank space where the word should have been'.¹⁷⁰

'Lawrence Lucifer' follows Gregory on this point.

If I say I love you I am using an idiom too soiled to express this cataclysm of nerves, this cataract of white flesh and gristle which open new eyes in me. I am opened suddenly like the valve of a flower, sticky, priapic: the snowdrop or the anemone brushing the warm flanks of Lesbos.¹⁷¹

'There should be another word'; 'I am using an idiom too soiled' -- both the connotative and denotative meanings of the word "love" are inapplicable. The answer lies in a redefinition of the term which would be more acceptable in the context.

In The Black Book, neither Gregory nor 'Lawrence Lucifer' is 'the conventionalized gramophone-record lover' satirized by Eliot in the clerk-typist scene in The Waste Land.¹⁷² The new definition of "love" implicit in the symbolism of the male-female relationship is 'acceptance', tied both to "the Hamlet question" and to man's relationship with nature. 'The whole question,' 'Lawrence Lucifer' says,

in essence, is acceptance, the depersonalization of self, of the society which one has absorbed. It is not only a question of art,

but a question of life.¹⁷³

'If I am foreign,' he says, 'it is because I am trying to accept the world, not deny its positivity; nor build it up on the shaky armature of an ethic.'¹⁷⁴ Here, too, is the key to Christian Marlowe's failure in Panic Spring -- he tried to 'build up' the world 'on the shaky armature of an ethic' imposed upon it from without. "Love" is the key to man and to the natural world, as Groddeck was at pains to point out.¹⁷⁵

The 'dim gnosis' toward which 'Lawrence Lucifer' moves in the novel Groddeck specifically relates to the male-female relationship which we have repeatedly stated symbolises 'the heraldic universe' and man's place in nature.¹⁷⁶ 'Whoever analyses himself, investigates and changes himself, he knows himself. But to know and to love are one and the same thing. "He knew his wife" -- that means, he loved her. Out of love comes birth. And he who knows himself is born again.'¹⁷⁷

Finally, then, the artist who attempts to symbolically communicate his 'gnosis' is very much involved with this new definition of "love". Durrell draws a significant parallel between 'Lawrence Lucifer' and Hilda. Both have 'the murderous gift of love':

'Between the artist I, and Hilda the prostitute, there is an immediate correspondence.'¹⁷⁸ The 'knowledge' which the artist has gleaned, and which he attempts to communicate, is knowledge of self. And he slowly murders himself with his writing, as Gregory did. The aspect of man as child which Durrell ties so closely to the concept of Tibet as "paradise"; the eternal nature of mankind which the artist epitomizes and which he communicates; and 'the heraldic universe' toward which 'Lawrence Lucifer' strives are all condensed in this new definition of the word "love".

It appears to me that one can always clearly distinguish two instruments used by the It in the composition of poetry: the child in man . . . , and the love impulse.

What does man paint? Only what his nature allows him to, what his eyes see or his inner being pays attention to. He always paints, he cannot paint anything else than what has become human, what is the property of his It, what belongs to him. The painted landscape is not the representation of the outside world, it is the landscape which his It has formed.¹⁷⁹

Now we have timely recognition that each man is entitled to his own reality, interpret it as he wants.
THE HERALDIC REALITY.¹⁸⁰

These two quotations, the first from Groddeck's The

Unknown Self, the second from Durrell's "Hamlet, Prince of China", underline the quintessential nature of The Black Book, especially the inter-relation in that novel of time, 'the heraldic universe' and the relationship of man with the natural world. In this capacity, they are a fitting conclusion to this chapter on the final novel of Durrell's early trilogy.

CHAPTER FOUR

"THE ROOF OF THE WORLD"

The preceding chapters have endeavoured to show, first, that Lawrence Durrell's first three novels constitute an early but unacknowledged trilogy, and, second, that they chronicle the development of Durrell's cosmography from the standpoint of time, 'the heraldic universe', and man's relationship to the natural world. The summary to Chapter Three showed how these three facets are inextricably linked in Durrell's system, with the third acting as the controlling element. This chapter will examine Cefalû (1947), showing how the cosmography developed in the early trilogy is still apparent, although in some instances under a different guise.

In a letter to Miller, Durrell described Cefalû as

a queer cosmological tale about seven modern European tourists who get lost in the labyrinth in Crete where the minotaur has begun to make a comeback. It is really an extended morality, but written artlessly in the style of a detective story. Guilt, Superstition, The Good Life, all appear as ordinary people; a soldier on leave, a medium, an elderly married couple (Trueman), a young unfledged pair, a missionary.¹

The story itself is a simple one. Passengers from the cruise ship Europa disembark at Crete to tour the laby-

rinth recently rediscovered by Sir Juan Axelos, whose home provides the title for the novel. There is a cave-in. Of four survivors, Lord Richard Graecen and Miss Virginia Dale escape to Cefalû, and the Trumans come out on "The Roof of the World" at the other end of the labyrinth. Fearmax (the medium), Campion (the painter) and Miss Dombey (the missionary) all die in the labyrinth. All but the Trumans are linked through a series of obviously contrived coincidences -- as Durrell said, 'in the style of a detective story'. As the name of the liner indicates, the characters are all essentially representatives of post-war Europe.

The structure of Cefalû is somewhat different from that of The Dark Labyrinth. The renamed novel has no divisions other than chapters,² while the original 1947 edition was divided into three distinct "parts". Those divisions are significant. "Part I" was "The Argument", and the fifth and last chapter in that section was entitled "Fearmax", rather than "The Medium". "Part II: The Labyrinth" contained seven chapters, the last being devoted to "Campion". "Part III: The Roof of the World" terminated with its second chapter, "At Cefalû". With the 'detective story' in mind, Cefalû should divide neatly into introduction,

main action and dénouement. But, in conventional terms, this does not happen. This is because Durrell is writing 'an extended morality' rather than a 'detective story', and the structure must be wrenched somewhat to suit a didactic purpose. So, while the 'main action' seemingly takes place in "Part II: The Labyrinth", the allegory is actually worked out in "Part III: The Roof of the World". The main figures are really only presented in any depth in the final portion of the novel, which deals solely with the Trumans and Ruth Adams. Seen in retrospect, the other characters and their respective fates are secondary to the main allegorical purpose of the novel.

The technique in Cefalû[^] is similar to that of Panic Spring: a number of 'portraits' and flashbacks, with a plot line which (in this case) involves only the Trumans. This is pointed up by the fact that, of the primary characters in the novel, only the Trumans are not given a 'portrait'. The rest are all somehow involved with either Hogarth, the taurine psychoanalyst who is the central figure of the "Portraits" chapter, or Axelos, the discoverer of the labyrinth. Hogarth and Axelos are the two poles around whom the characters

other than the Trumans revolve. The former may be seen as representative of European man, the latter of Mediterranean man.

One assumes that, in the context of a morality, the identification of the allegorical figures should be an easy task. G.S. Fraser's identification of them is generally sound, if somewhat too easy.³ His identification of Hogarth is, for example, misleading. Hogarth is clearly Groddeck in fictional form. His volumes on the 'philosophy of disease' and his views on the relationship of the artist to his art are obviously Groddeckian in flavour.⁴ As Durrell pointed out to Miller, Groddeck's adaptation of Freud 'makes organic sense of the discoveries as a system, instead of a mechanist attachment to Victorian physics'.⁵ Fraser's quasi-etymological approach to the name, finally yielding 'hogward' as its source, is unnecessary. Groddeck's 'organic' view is to Freud's discoveries as William Hogarth's engravings were to the conventionalized landscapes and portraits of eighteenth century England.⁶ Thus Durrell's attaching of the painter's name to the character of the psychoanalyst is not as awkward as Fraser thinks.

The controlling metaphor for the novel is the labyrinth. The analogy being drawn between the physical Cretan labyrinth and the human mind is pointed up clearly enough in the original title of the novel. Specific references in the text elaborate on this relationship, and it is to these references that we must turn in order to bring the treatment of the three major themes into focus.

The concept of the journey upon which Durrell's 'island trilogy' is based also informs Cefalû and the metaphor of the labyrinth. For Baird, the 'soldier on leave' to whom Durrell referred, travel is always toward oneself. That is to say, one sets out on a voyage in order to find truths about one's inner nature.

Well, there remained mountain ranges to be crossed for all of us; paradoxically enough, travel was only a sort of metaphorical journey -- an outward symbol of an inward march upon reality.⁷

In terms of the labyrinth, however, we may say that the theme of travel has become more particularized. Travel toward oneself has become a journey into the depths of one's mind -- a cephalic journey toward the source of

one's innermost being. At times in the novel, the allegory is so ponderous on this point that it tends to exasperate the reader. Nonetheless, we must accept Durrell's view of the novel as 'an extended morality', considering, too, that at this point the 'search-for-self' motif and its psychological adjuncts have perhaps become so commonplace as to warp the reader's judgement in this case.

Thus Fearmax's ponderings on the meaning of the labyrinth, for example, are intended to enlighten the reader.

Or was this whole place [the labyrinth] merely a mad exteriorization of his inner confusion: his feet walking slowly down metaphoric corridors of his own subconscious -- in which only the roar of the sleeping monster gave him a clue to his primal guilt.⁸

Fearmax, of course, does not return from the labyrinth. Instead, he achieves 'the Absolute' when he is carried off by the minotaur.⁹ The Trumans, however, do leave the labyrinth, and Truman's view of the minotaur is meant to be juxtaposed with that of Fearmax, in order that the point of the allegory may be driven home with some finality.

Truman shook his head and puzzled
 over the problem for a moment;
 it was as if he were unwilling
 to admit that they had domesticated,
 so to speak, the minotaur; domes-
 ticated their terrors in the shape
 of a brown cow¹⁰

Each of the characters who becomes lost in the labyrinth does, in some measure, explore his own psyche. Their findings necessarily differ from each other, although we may classify each as being in some way concerned with his 'terrors'. Thus Fearmax, whose name implies an extreme sensitivity to the 'terrors' of his inner self, is presumably killed by a creature other than the 'brown cow' the Trumans find; Miss Dombey, on the other hand, discovers that the 'second coming' for which she has longed and which she has preached is in reality the 'second coming' of her father, and not of Jesus Christ;¹¹ while Campion, who has attempted to put Fearmax's theories to work in his art, dies when he and Virginia Dale plunge to the water below from a ledge overlooking the sea.¹² For each of them, as Fearmax tells himself, the experience in the labyrinth becomes "a novitiate towards a new degree of self-knowledge".¹³ This is the point, then, of Durrell's fourth novel: it is 'an extended morality' which, by means of its allegory,

is intended to teach the reader about self-knowledge and provide situations from which he may learn.

Time in Cefalù[^]

The concept of time which applies in Cefalù[^] is the one which Durrell first worked out for Panic Spring: volumetric time as opposed to linear, chronological time. Its representative is Ruth Adams, who has been on 'The Roof of the World' for so long that she no longer takes cognizance of linear time as being at all important. "Past tense, present tense -- what does it mean?" [she] said at last.¹⁴ What the Trumans sense -- the view of time as a body of water -- would seem to reassert linearity, but this is not the case. 'There was nothing, in the deepest and most vital sense, to be said; no summing up, no judgement to be passed upon what had begun to travel through them -- time in its pure state -- as water will run noiselessly through fingers trailed from a boat.'¹⁵ For the Trumans, time has ceased to exist as important. It has become merely a medium upon which one glides from place to place like a boat on water. A quotation from Thoreau which Durrell later uses in White Eagles Over Serbia (1957)

clarifies this notion for us. 'Time is but the stream
I go a-fishing in,' says Thoreau.

I drink at it; but while I drink
I see the sandy bottom and detect
how shallow it is. Its thin
current slides away, but eternity
remains.¹⁶

Thus, for the Trumans, the 'thin current' of linear
time slides away, and 'eternity remains'.

Of the characters who do not enter the labyrinth
but nonetheless undergo an experience of self, Baird
is the most significant. There is some question in
"The Argument" as to whether or not he had gone on the
expedition. In fact, he had spent the time trying to
lay the ghost of Böcklin, the young German officer whom
he had killed during the Cretan campaign. Baird is
afflicted with a recurring dream of Böcklin, and the
"Portraits" section of the novel is in part devoted
to Hogarth's analysis of his difficulties. The
significance of the dream for Baird parallels the
significance of the labyrinth for Fearmax. On the
surface, psychoanalysis seems to be a viable method
of exploring the psyche. In the end, however, Hogarth
gives the case up, and his comments are a further
indication of the inefficacy of the linear view of

time. "I've got all the factual data I need," he says; "you've had the whole works.

But somewhere I must have made a mess of it, or else you need to keep on dreaming the dream until something happens to you -- I mean until you change inside. You know, the dream may be simply a sort of prompting to change inside; it's possible that it might be necessary to you -- until you change. It's no good following it down the time track any farther."¹⁷

The relationship between psychoanalysis and 'the time track' which is made clear in this quotation is significant to the experiences both of Baird and of the characters lost in the labyrinth. In effect, Durrell is saying that self-knowledge is unrelated to linear time but, rather, is dependent upon the sloughing of one's chronologically-influenced attitudes to self and to others.

This will be made clear later in this chapter, especially in relation to Ruth Adams, but at this point we may take the following quotation from "Cities, Plains and People" as being a central statement of Durrell's views.

Truth within the tribal wells,
Innocent inviting creature
Does not rise to human spells
But by paradox

Teaches all who seek for her
 That no saint or seer unlocks
 The wells of truth unless he first
 Conquer for the truth his thirst.¹⁸

We shall have a great deal to say about this 'truth' when we come to look at 'the heraldic universe' as it appears in Cefalû. In the context of the labyrinth and its symbolic meaning in the novel, however, the 'truth' for which specific characters are searching is self-knowledge. The need for divorcing oneself from linear time is thus an important aspect of that search and, indeed, of the other concepts with which Durrell's 'extended morality' deals.

'The Heraldic Universe' in Cefalû

Chapter Three defined 'the heraldic universe' which 'Lawrence Lucifer' seeks in The Black Book as being a highly personal universe, the discovery of which is dependent upon the discovery of knowledge of the self. The controlling metaphor which Durrell uses in Cefalû, seen in terms of the relationship of the majority of the characters to the labyrinth, is thus designed as a physical representation of the 'search-for-self' which those characters undertake.

As has been suggested above, that search is undertaken both within and without the labyrinth. In

these terms, Baird becomes as significant as the Trumans, in that he gains a knowledge of self and manages to lay the ghost of Böcklin by the end of the novel. The third example which we shall discuss is Fearmax, who gains the 'gnosis' of which 'Lawrence Lucifer' speaks in a way which is different from that of either Baird or the Trumans.

Fearmax is an interesting character, inasmuch as he is the direct link with the occult concepts which Durrell later utilizes in The Alexandria Quartet. The clearest evidence we have that Durrell intended to view this material seriously is in Hogarth's comment, "Fearmax is most interesting. He has hold of one end of the magic cord of knowledge."¹⁹ The search which Fearmax has been conducting most of his life is for something 'that should combine, should synthesize' pleasure, instruction and illumination. As an occultist, Fearmax naturally thinks in terms of the analogies which informed the practice of magic during the Renaissance. His search is therefore couched in those terms. He has been looking, he thinks, for

something which would bridge the
gap between the universe of light
and matter, and the small

circumscribed universe of the
world he lived in²⁰

His search has thus far been through books and manuscripts which might in some way illuminate his goal, and Durrell mentions both Budge and Evans-Wentz, material which we have seen has a definite bearing on The Black Book. These texts, however, have not answered Fearmax's questions.

Indeed, by the time he was twenty-one his reading was immense though sporadic. He had created around himself a jungle of ill-cultivated plants -- philosophies, with their weird blooms and stunted systems, like Christian Science or Theosophy. It was a disinterested hunger for some illuminating text which would explain not only the mystery of the world around him, but also his existence in it. What was he doing on earth?²¹

Turning from his reading, Fearmax entered psychoanalysis with Hogarth, hoping that this pursuit would give him answers. Like Baird, however, he was thrown back upon himself. But not before some of Hogarth's theories had had an impact upon him. While trapped in the labyrinth, Fearmax begins to analyse his situation through Hogarth's methods. The basic concepts are very much those of Groddeck, who always made it a practice to ask his patients why they had



contracted a particular disease or caused particular harm to themselves.²² Thus Fearmax recalls that "Hogarth would have first asked him to question himself as to the dramatic justification for such a situation. He remembered him saying: 'We act our inner symbolism outward into the world. In a very real sense we do create the world around us since we get it to reflect back our inner symbolism at us. Every man carries a little myth making machine inside him which operates often without him knowing it. Thus you might say that we live by a very exacting kind of poetic logic -- since we get exactly what we ask for, no more and no less.'",²³ The 'poetic logic' to which Hogarth refers is clearly an echo of 'the time of poem' which Durrell employed in The Black Book. And Fearmax's fate is suited both to his name and to his intellectual pursuits: in Hogarth's terms, Fearmax has himself created the minotaur which carries him away to his death.²⁴

Durrell has included Campion as a major figure for two reasons. First, he is the symbolic 'artist' whose predicament Durrell was to later discuss in The Alexandria Quartet. Here we might do well to recall Groddeck's comments on painters in particular.

What does man paint? Only what his nature allows him to, what his eyes see or his inner being pays attention to. He always paints, he cannot paint anything else than what has become human, what is the property of his It, what belongs to him. The painted landscape is not the representation of the outside world, it is the landscape which his It has formed.²⁵

This comment explains why it is that neither Graecen nor Baird can understand how the tempestuous Campion can paint the placid landscapes he does.²⁶ It also helps to explain the remarks which Campion makes to Fearmax regarding his own view of his creative power.

This is the second reason for Campion's presence in Cefalu. He is a means of expressing some of Fearmax's theories on the self and, in his dual function, we can see Durrell pointedly indicating the relationship which he has found between Groddeck's theories and the role of the artist.

Generally speaking, the role of the artist is a mythopaeic one for Campion. That is to say, he is constantly creating a myth which is peculiar to himself and, if he has gained self-knowledge, is aware of his

role. But the theories which Campion propounds are a reiteration of Fearmax's theories, and they are made to Fearmax himself. The following series of quotations shows the progression of the essential theory.

"The theory of the life-death polarity is something which I've actually proved for myself -- in my own life. You remember? That when the death-principle asserts itself in our lives reality itself gets turned inside out, so that instead of being detached from it -- watching it happen as an extraneous thing -- one begins to manufacture it, like a silkworm manufactures its own cocoon?

When one begins, you say, reality is everything that is outside; when the principle of death germinates, first as a conscious idea, then as a fugitive sub-conscious premonition, finally as something beyond these; when that happens the fundamental nature of reality is changed. The individual gets fixed in his destiny and irresistibly begins to manufacture his own personal myth, his reality. Around him there gradually accumulates a kind of mythological ectoplasm -- it informs his acts and words. The cocoon forms in which his -- for want of a better word -- immortal self is enshrined.

I am spinning a myth about myself in a series of canvasses. It is so lucid and clear that it scares me. I am not troubled by what I

might be unable to say. I am troubled by what I shall, unknown to myself, reveal. And yet the process is irresistible. I am forced to separate from people and conditions because, like a leper, I am afraid of infecting them with my own contrived disease."²⁷

The 'theory of the life-death polarity' with which the first quotation begins is, of course, a direct reference to the epigram from the Phaedo with which the novel is prefaced. In Chapter Three, we saw that the states of 'becoming' of which Socrates speaks in the Phaedo are related to the bardo states which Evans-Wentz describes in his introduction to The Tibetan Book of the Dead, a book which Fearmax had read. The 'life-death polarity' is therefore Socrates' view that life and death are only the extremes of 'being'. The 'death principle' of which Campion speaks is consequently a realization that dying itself is not terminal, but that it leads to another state of 'being'. The nature of reality must consequently change when the individual becomes aware of the significance of death, and it is at this point that he 'begins to manufacture his own personal myth, his reality'.

In effect, Durrell is expanding upon Groddeck's

theory that the individual should rightly say, not 'I live', but 'I am lived by the It'. The 'personal myth' which begins to form when acceptance of the It principle has occurred has been particularized in Groddeck's comments on the nature of painted landscape, quoted above. The individual creates his own reality just as the artist creates the landscape which he portrays. The universality of this principle is briefly referred to by Campion when he says, '"The equipment is lying like an unpressed switch in the heart of every man"'.²⁸ The same principle was put forward by Miller in a letter to Durrell in 1937. 'When man becomes fully conscious of his powers, his role, his destiny,' Miller says, 'he is an artist and ceases to struggle with reality. He lives out his dream of Paradise. He transmutes his real experience of life into spiritual equations.'²⁹ For both Miller and Durrell, the artist is necessary to the world only because individuals will not themselves put to use the powers which lie within every one of them.

The link between 'the heraldic universe' and the search for self-knowledge is so plain that we must now clarify the former in terms of the latter. As we have

seen, the structuring metaphor Durrell employs is also a key to the major preoccupation in the novel. The essential comments on the search for self-knowledge in the novel centre on Fearmax and Ruth Adams, and those comments are as much concerned with the path as with the goal. In effect, the comments made by these two characters are intended to complement each other. Thus Fearmax, in talking with Campion, gives one view of the ultimate goal of the search.

"It seems to me . . . that you affirm far too much. You are right, of course, that we all work through the various states of being, our negatives, our husks, which we discard. But can we, at any given point, know that we've arrived at the end of the quest? Surely the self-consciousness of the illumination you talk about does not tell us we have reached the -- what shall I say? -- 'The Absolute', 'God', 'Tao'. It is, on the contrary, that growing awareness which disposes of the act of searching.

The sage has nothing to tell us, you know. It is by his silence alone that we deduce the fact of his existence."³⁰

The 'states of being' of which Fearmax speaks are, of course, the bardo states of The Tibetan Book of the Dead and the states of existence of which Socrates

speaks in the Phaedo. The parallel between these lines and the lines from "Cities, Plains and People" quoted earlier is striking -- so striking that we may see the latter as a summary of the former.

Ruth Adams explains her view of the same situation to Elsie Truman, but in far less technical terms than those used by Fearmax. Nonetheless, they are complementary views.

Elsie Truman stared fixedly at a chip in the masonry and said:
 "How do you . . . did you . . .
 find it? I mean the feeling?"

For a long time [Ruth Adams] said nothing, she arched her brows as if she were trying to locate within herself the sources of the spring. At last she said: "I don't know." She closed her eyes. "There's no positive way. It's rather a negative business -- becoming still enough inside to be receptive to it. You can't seek for it, but if you prepare for it it will come and settle on you like an Emperor moth. In fact, not 'seek and ye shall find' as the Bible says, but 'prepare and ye shall be found'."³¹

Mrs. Adams' negative definition of the quest, or more correctly her positive definition of the non-quest, is clearly linked to Fearmax's concept of the discarding of 'negatives'. The impossibility of communicating this

information, and the consequent emphasis on the attempts to reach 'the goal' as being totally individualistic, are here a clear echo of The Black Book. Thus it is that Fearmax's musings in the labyrinth provide a restatement of the view put forward in the third novel of the early trilogy, and may be seen as both a clarification and extrapolation of the views of Ruth Adams. "To deal with evidence that cannot be reconciled to the body and canons of everyday science has been the task of all independent minds since the beginning of history.

It is no less the task of the individual in whose experience must inevitably arise emotions or thoughts which are neither rational nor commonplace. The body of work left us by men like Blake and Nostradamus. . . .". He bumped his head on a ledge and stopped to swear. "Madness, therefore, must be a conditional term in our judgement of them.

Their work constitutes, therefore, as does that of the medium, deliberate states of being not communicable in linguistic terms."32

The linguistic nihilism toward which 'Lawrence Lucifer' moves in The Black Book is here given a concrete rationale. Ultimately, both for Durrell and for his characters,

neither the attainment of the goal nor 'the heraldic universe' which is that goal can be delineated 'in linguistic terms'. The individual, the artist, can attempt to communicate metaphorically, but because of the twentieth century emphasis on observable data and verifiable fact, precision in communication is lost: the 'evidence . . . cannot be reconciled to the body and canons of everyday science'. The 'heraldic universe' remains a totally individual 'dream of Paradise' which the individual, as Miller indicates, must 'live out' by himself.

The Natural World in Cefalu

The natural world, as stated earlier, is the controlling element in Cefalu. The 'heraldic universe' is, in terms of Fearmax's view of the death-principle, the natural world which the individual inhabits when 'reality itself gets turned inside out'. To reiterate Groddeck's viewpoint, 'the heraldic universe' is the world which the It of each individual creates for him. Thus the state of repose which Walsh Clifton attains in Panic Spring, and the objective viewpoint which 'Lawrence Lucifer' attempts to maintain in The Black Book, are the necessary first stages in the awareness of the death-principle, and by extension

the first step in achievement of 'the heraldic universe'.

However, it is possible for the natural world to have an influence on the individual such that he will, in his acceptance of his role in that world, attain the stillness required of him. Time, for example, becomes non-existent as an abstract concept. The best examples in the novel are the Trumans, the characters who succeed in attaining to their own 'heraldic universe' in a seemingly physical sense. Their view of time, once they have been with Ruth Adams a while, changes. 'Their function became more absolutely defined by the work demanded by the season. Yet there was no sense of calendar time left in either of them.'³³

Similarly, the Trumans become aware of a change in their relationship to the world around them. This change is epitomized in the application of the term, 'The Roof of the World', to the plateau on which they now live. As in The Black Book, Durrell's view of "Paradise" is strongly linked to the Tibet which he wanted to see, but never saw, as a child in the hill country of India. This is strictly in keeping with Groddeck's view of the goal to which each man aspires as being predicated upon 'what he was and what he had in infancy'.³⁴ Thus it is that, in the following

quotation, Truman expresses himself in terms of having achieved a god-like state: he feels as if he is the Officer Commanding, or Officer in Charge of, the Universe. He has achieved the god-like potential which Groddeck indicates is present in every man. He has become the artist who, because his life is the work he is creating, has become silent.

It seemed to them . . . that they had reached the meridian of human knowledge. The luminous landscape echoed, in its tranquillity, the thought. If there was no way back there was at least no way forward: the discovery of themselves was itself complete enough to prevent them wanting, hoping, striving. "I feel," said Truman, struggling with the inadequacies of his vocabulary. "I feel O.C. Universe," and his wife lying down with her hands behind her head, smiled up her content and happiness as she chewed a grass stalk. She had realized that the roof of the world did not really exist, except in their own imaginations!³⁵

The human qualities of wanting, hoping and striving are here purposely negated, strictly in keeping with a discussion which the Trumans had had with Ruth Adams earlier. In that discussion, Mrs. Adams had pointed

out to the Trumans that, in her brother Godfrey's terms, such qualities were really not basically human. In fact, they tended to keep man away from his ultimate destiny, the union with the natural world which the Trumans come to typify. Godfrey's views are seminal to the whole view of man's relationship to the cosmos which Durrell has put forward throughout his writing.

"Godfrey said that in some way we had become allied to the forces of Nature instead of against them. He had studied philosophy and used to say that the whole of the western civilization we knew was based on the Will: and that led always to action and to destruction. Whereas he claimed there was something inside us, an element of repose he called it, which you could develop, and alter your life completely."³⁶ .

While Ruth Adams goes on to suggest that one might even have an effect on the outside world -- her axe, for example, is not wearing out even though she has made much use of it --, the key here lies in the equation of the 'Will' or ego with the qualities of wanting, hoping and striving. In Chapters Two and Three, we noticed that Durrell is suggesting that the individual discard his ego in favour of inclusion in the natural world. The reasons are clearly stated here, and the corollary is presented: that, should man continue to

pursue the desires of his ego or 'Will', he will continue on the path of action and, ultimately, destruction. Accepting this concept as being basic to Durrell's thinking, we can then see why books such as The Tibetan Book of the Dead and various texts of Taoism are important to him: they present a mode of living or philosophy which is in direct contrast to 'the whole of the western civilization'.

Godfrey's theories present a negative view of the 'Will' in terms of humanity as a whole. There is, however, a basic statement of this same view, directly from the individual's standpoint, in an unpublished short story housed in the UCLA Durrell Collection.³⁷ The title character of "The Will-Power Man", Mr. Barnabas, is a Dickensian character working in a thoroughly Dickensian firm, while the narrator is an efficiency expert. The essence of the story is that Barnabas, who 'was enslaved by the idea of a strong will',³⁸ has caused the death of a little girl, even though he himself was injured in an attempt to save her. He is, in his own eyes, 'a murderer whom nobody will hang. All due to the demonic power of the will.'³⁹ In the end, however, he has changed; he is no longer a

practitioner of 'Pelmanism'.

"I've changed very much you know. I feel -- it's hard to say. This stupid fall of mine. I feel as if I had faced the worst in my own character somehow and triumphed over it. I am so happy, you know . . ."
 He reflected for a moment before going on . . . "And you know? My will? I feel I have broken it at last, turned [?] it. I am free from it at last, my friend, free." He raised both hands like a prisoner shedding handcuffs. "I'm free" he said. "Maybe there is a lesson in this for us all."
 40
 Maybe there is.

These brief excerpts from "The Will-Power Man" indicate that Durrell has a specific moral standpoint in mind and, taken in conjunction with Cefalu^u, we can see what that standpoint is. The individual must shed his ego, and with it his tendencies toward the kind of destruction which Barnabas felt he caused. The destructive nature of the human will has given rise to, among other things, 'the growth of the state as a concept and the beginning of social conscience -- [yet] all this is only a detour, a long and vicious detour through the material amenities' toward an elusive happiness which will remain elusive so long

as the propensities of the will are followed.⁴¹

There is another view of this same concept in Tunc-Nunquam, which we will examine later. But in all cases where Durrell has put this concept forward, the moral standpoint remains. This is in direct keeping with Groddeck's view of the will and its place in man's existence. That view, like the view in Cefalû and "The Will-Power Man", is totally negative.

When anyone uses the word "I" -- whether in thought or in speech or in hearing -- his connection with other things is thereby broken. "I" proclaims that this individual person is separate from the rest of the world; it divides the universe into two parts, into "I" and "World", into "I" and "Not-I". So soon as he even thinks this word, the individual takes up a separate position, and thereby becomes responsible and guilty; it expresses his curious and unfounded belief in the power of his will.⁴²

This negative view of the ego and its will is thus one of the central lessons which Durrell hoped that Cefalû would teach. Freedom from the ego and from the will is essential to the well-being of the individual and of the humanity which each individual epitomizes.

The repose which Ruth Adams considers so

necessary for this achievement of discarding the ego is similar to the state which Christian Marlowe wished to reach in Panic Spring. It involves, she says, becoming 'as still as a needle'.⁴³ When that occurs, as it does for the Trumans, then one begins to see oneself rearranged in one's relationship with the natural world. This new position, according to Mrs. Adams, is an amoral one, a view which is not seemingly in keeping with what has just been said about Durrell's moral standpoint on the topic. But Mrs. Adams' view is after the fact; Durrell's didactic purpose is before the fact. Thus it is that the view of 'love' per se is altered, both for Ruth Adams and for Durrell. For, ultimately, it is total 'love' which the individual experiences, and it is defined in a curious and totally amoral way.

"I remember how life was before,"
pursued the old lady quietly.

"I was outside everything in a certain way. Now I participate with everything. I feel joined to everything in a new kind of way. Before I lived by moral precepts -- for morality is an attempt to unite ourselves with people. Now I don't feel the need for religion, or faith in the old sense. In my own mind, inside (not as something I think or feel, but as something I am)

inside there I no longer prohibit and select. I include. It's the purely scientific meaning of the word 'love'."44

The echoes from Remy de Gourmont's The Natural Philosophy of Love are clear. For both De Gourmont and Ruth Adams, 'love' is the sense of total participation with one's world, of a union with the cosmos which is totally amoral in terms of the old systems. There is a parallel in Baird's situation in the novel. He must learn the meaning of gleichgültigkeit, the concept about which Böcklin had been teaching him before he was killed.⁴⁵ In essence, gleichgültigkeit is moral insensibility. In terms of Cefalû, it is the state which one achieves after self-knowledge has been reached and one achieves union with the natural world of which, after all, one is so much a part. It is Durrell's summation of the whole 'extended morality' he has created in his fourth novel.

Finally, we may say that Cefalû is, indeed, an adaptation of the mediaeval morality play to the modern novel. According to G. S. Fraser, 'because the characters are clichés, it is hard not to take the ideas as clichés, too.'⁴⁶ But the magic of the

morality play lies in its repetition, and in the fact that, because of repetition, the characters become like old friends. Durrell uses Einsteinian concepts in The Alexandria Quartet because he feels they provide 'unities' which are more relevant to the twentieth century. In Cefalû, he has created an 'extended morality' which, even if the characters are not new to us, he nevertheless feels is relevant to our time. The new view of self which he advocates in his fourth novel is really a condensation of the view he explored in the early trilogy. In brief, Cefalû advocates a rejection of the ego in order that the individual may achieve a union with the world in which he lives. This union is helped immensely when the individual begins to create that world as a painter creates a landscape on canvas, or as a novelist creates a world in print. Thus achieving union with the world is predicated upon achieving self-knowledge; and this latter achievement, in turn, brings the individual to a realization of the 'heraldic universe' which he begins to inhabit. Linear time is inconsequential, as are life and death, in this new universe. In a word, the rearrangement of one's stance vis à vis life and the world is resumed in the new connotations

which Ruth Adams gives to the word 'love'.

CHAPTER FIVE

"THE HARD-WON TERRITORY OF DREAMS"

Lawrence Durrell would seem to write novels every decade, judging by the length of time which elapsed between the publication of The Black Book (1937) and Cefalû (1947), and between Cefalû and Justine (1956), the first volume of The Alexandria Quartet. In the latter interval he had written his first published play, Sappho (1950),¹ and had probably written White Eagles Over Serbia (1957), a spy thriller in the Buchan tradition which a reader at Faber's classified as a juvenile, much to Durrell's dismay. While any attempt to promulgate "truisms" about Durrell would be fatuous, we may nevertheless consider the possibility that he requires roughly ten years to reconsider and reshape the ideas he has put forward in one novel (or group of novels) before embarking on another effort.

This would seem to be the case with the transition from Cefalû to The Alexandria Quartet. As we saw in Chapter Four, Cefalû is indeed an 'extended morality' which embodies the principles Durrell put forward in his early trilogy, and its chief aim is didactic. The main stress in the fourth novel is on the individual and his need for self-realization if he is to cope effectively with the world around him. That stress is presented in terms of the three major themes which first appeared in the trilogy: time, 'the heraldic universe', and man's

relationship to the natural world. Seen primarily from the viewpoint of Groddeck, the latter two themes are essentially the same, 'the heraldic universe' being a qualification of the natural world which is dependent for its existence at all on the requisite self-realization on the part of the individual.

These themes recur in The Alexandria Quartet. It is, as Durrell suggests, an investigation of 'love', but 'love' in the sense in which Ruth Adams defines it in Cefalû: 'inclusion', the 'purely scientific' meaning of the word. But the whole structure of the Quartet is 'purely scientific', as Durrell's claims for it as a 'word continuum' based on Einsteinian principles suggest. Indeed, the principles embodied in Cefalû are the basis for the techniques which Durrell uses in the Quartet in his attempt to translate Einstein's 'space-time soup-mix' to the medium of the novel. Chapter Five will therefore begin by dealing with Durrell's theory of the spatial deployment of the volumes, later moving on to a discussion of the major themes with which the Quartet deals: the growth of the artist, and the importance of the feminine principle.

Narrative Theory in The Alexandria Quartet.

The prefacing "Note" to volume two, Balthazar

(1958), has proved a source of irritation to a great many students of Durrell. Nevertheless, it is a clear statement of the author's intent, and as such is worth quoting at length.

Modern literature offers us no Unities, so I have turned to science and am trying to complete a four-decker novel whose form is based on the relativity proposition.

Three sides of space and one of time constitute the soup-mix recipe of a continuum. The four novels follow this pattern.

The three first parts, however, are to be deployed spatially (hence the use of "sibling" not "sequel") and are not linked in a serial form. They interlap, interweave, in a purely spatial relation. Time is stayed. The fourth part alone will represent time and be a true sequel. The subject-object relation is so important to relativity that I have tried to turn the novel through both subjective and objective modes. The third part, Mountolive, is a straight naturalistic novel in which the narrator of Justine and Balthazar becomes an object, i.e. a character.²

One or two comments are necessary in the way of clarification before we can move on to the significance of this note. The 'spatial relation' of the first three parts, the way in which 'they interlap, interweave', applies to the action which the narrator of each describes. Thus Durrell is consciously defining the novel in terms of the action, and thereby implicitly defining the terms of his later statement, 'I have tried to turn the novel through

both subjective and objective modes'. The 'three sides of space' which are Justine, Balthazar and Mountolive are not 'sides' in the physical sense at all. Instead, the term is a concrete metaphor used to specify narrative viewpoint -- or, more correctly, narrative "placing" -- in each of the books. Justine is narrated by L. G. Darley. Darley is also the narrator of Balthazar, but much of the second part is composed of an 'Interlinear' which the title character has supplied after reading the manuscript of Justine. And Mountolive employs the device of the omniscient narrator, which in some sense defines Durrell's use of 'naturalistic' above. So we are dealing with the actual physical placing of the narrator vis à vis the action he describes when we deal with Durrell's use of the continuum in structuring his novel.

Durrell's use of 'novel' rather than "novels" in discussing the Quartet is significant. He is really writing only one novel, not four, and this provides the key to the relationship between the first three parts. Justine, Balthazar and Mountolive involve the same action. The difference between the three is the difference in narrative placing. Thus the "Workpoints" appended to Justine, Balthazar and Clea are intended to supply additional data from other narrative sites which will

indicate to the reader the potential vastness and variety of the action. As Durrell points out at the beginning of Clea,

Among the workpoints at the end of this volume I have sketched a number of possible ways of continuing to deploy these characters and situations in further instalments -- but this is only to suggest that even if the series were extended indefinitely the result would never become a roman fleuve (an expansion of the matter in serial form) but would remain strictly part of the present word-continuum.³

The structuring of the relationship of the parts of The Alexandria Quartet is therefore based primarily on a theory of the "placing" of the narrator(s) in each part. And that theory depends on the adaptation of Einsteinian relativity to the novel mode.

Durrell has been at some pains to include in the text of the novel itself several broad hints as to the technique he has employed, quite apart from either his own authorial comments or remarks by Darley which indicate an awareness of the way in which a particular part of the novel is structured.⁴ The weight which we are expected to give to these hints appears to have been calculated in direct relation to the stage which the writing of the novel (and our reading of it) has reached. Thus there is

a passing remark by Justine in the first part, a somewhat lengthier marginal annotation by Balthazar in the second part, and a more technical statement from Pursewarden's "My Conversations With Brother Ass" in Clea.

These three "clues", as it were, are developmental and, as such, are interrelated. The first occurs early in Justine.

I remember [Justine] sitting before the multiple mirrors at the dress-maker's, being fitted for a shark-skin costume, and saying: 'Look! five different pictures of the same subject. Now if I wrote I would try for a multi-dimensional effect in character, a sort of prism-sightedness. Why should not people show more than one profile at a time?'⁵

Much of the first part of The Alexandria Quartet is concerned with the delineation and exploration of character, although the kind of multiplicity at which Justine hints is not realized technically until the manuscript of that part is juxtaposed with the 'Great Interlinear' which Balthazar provides. If we compare this theoretical statement with the "Note" to Balthazar quoted earlier, we find that the mirror metaphor is the first concrete attempt in the Quartet to exemplify the 'subject-object relation' which is 'so important to relativity'. From this early point in the development of the novel, in

fact, the prism or mirror metaphor is the standard means which Durrell uses when referring to the multiplicity of facets which each character presents.⁶

Here, too, we have the first slight hint at the importance of the physical positioning of the narrator, specifically in relation to an individual character with whom he is dealing. At this stage, however, it is only a hint -- its total significance is not made clear until later in the novel. But we may clarify the intent of Justine's remark by referring to a statement by Pursewarden recorded in Balthazar.

'We live,' writes Pursewarden somewhere, 'lives based upon selected fictions. Our view of reality is conditioned by our position in space and time -- not by our personalities as we like to think. Thus every interpretation of reality is based upon a unique position. Two paces east or west and the whole picture is changed.'⁷

Seen in these terms, the picture of reality which Darley is consciously attempting to paint in Justine must necessarily be limited and hence inaccurate. Because his 'position' as narrator of that part of the Quartet is 'unique', he cannot be aware of the multiplicity of aspects which each of his characters presents. The function of Balthazar's 'Great Interlinear' is to provide

Darley with aspects of, say, Justine, which his own limited and limiting position necessarily made unavailable to him.

Thus there are in actuality two narrators in Balthazar. Darley retains his function as the consciously structuring narrator, but he must now attempt to incorporate the additional material which Balthazar has provided. He becomes aware that 'the Interlinear now raises for [him] much more than the problem of objective "truth to life", or if you like "to fiction". It raises, as life itself does . . . the harder grained question of form'.⁸ More precisely, Darley is faced with the incorporation of data observed from another narrative site -- specifically, the position occupied by Balthazar which is every bit as 'unique' as Darley's own. In order that the intercalation of this new material might be made easier, Durrell has removed Darley from Alexandria before the writing of Justine begins. While Darley's 'headland in the Cyclades' is as much metaphoric as concrete,⁹ symbolising as it does the "detachment" which he requires as an artist, he is also physically removed from the narrative site which (following Pursewarden above) determined the view which he records of his characters and the action in which they are involved. This physical detachment thus makes it easier for him to accept Balthazar's material and, by

extension, the possibility of another, different view of the material which he has recorded in the Justine manuscript.

But how is Darley to solve 'the harder grained question of form' which the Interlinear has raised?

'I suppose (writes Balthazar) that if you wished somehow to incorporate all I am telling you into your own Justine manuscript now, you would find yourself with a curious sort of book -- the story would be told, so to speak, in layers. Unwittingly I may have supplied you with a form, something out of the way! Not unlike Pursewarden's idea of a series of novels with "sliding panels" as he called them.'¹⁰

Darley's choice is to write 'a new book -- a new Alexandria' in which he attempts to 'extend the frontiers of original truth, filling in with the rubble of this new knowledge the foundations upon which to build a new Alexandria'.¹¹ So we have the second part of The Alexandria Quartet, a means of presenting Balthazar's material which ensures that what the Interlinear reveals will be received by the reader as not only contemporaneous but co-equal with the Justine manuscript -- 'hence the use of "sibling" not "sequel"'.

For the most part, Balthazar's suggested form is

like Justine's mirror image, in that it expands the concept of 'prism-sightedness' at which she hints. We are now to have observations from two narrative sites, the details of which we may compare in order to gain a fuller portrait of the characters than Justine could give us. Further, we are to be confronted with this new material so that we may experience the shock of revelation which Darley has felt in reading Balthazar's notes. Yet surely this proposed theory is not new? Durrell is too well-versed a craftsman to insist that it is.

In essence, the technique which Balthazar suggests is that of the traditional first person narrative. True, the data from the Interlinear are given in much greater detail than is possible in the usual one-volume novel, but this is why a second volume is necessary. Further, the second volume gives Durrell greater scope for Darley's ruminations and reflections on new pieces of data which were hitherto unknown to him -- greater scope, at least, than is normally available to the narrator-protagonist who must react to the knowledge, say, that his church-going maiden aunt operates a brothel! No, on the face of it the technique which Balthazar proposes to Darley is a weak excuse for extending a first person narrative to

two volumes. And the epigram from Stendahl which prefaces Mountolive -- 'Il faut que le roman raconte' -- only heightens our suspicions that the clarity of parts one and two is not certain in the author's mind and that he has been forced to write 'a straight naturalistic novel' in order to achieve what the first two parts have not. But in terms of the structure proposed by Pursewarden in "My Conversations With Brother Ass", as we shall see, this is far from the case, and parts one through three are clearly necessary to the form which Durrell is attempting to achieve with The Alexandria Quartet.

Ludwig Pursewarden ('his' real name was Percy,¹²) is very much concerned with time and western man, as befits a character whose surname derives from the compression of the Christian names of Percy Wyndham Lewis.¹³ He is the practising novelist and novel theorist of the Quartet, and his theories are the most explicit discussion of the 'space-time soup-mix' we are given in the novel.

'No, but seriously, if you wished to be -- I do not say original but merely contemporary -- you might try a four-card trick in the form of a novel; passing a common axis through four stories, say, and dedicating each to one of the four winds of heaven. A continuum, forsooth, embodying not a temps retrouvé but

a temps délivré. The curvature of space itself would give you stereoscopic narrative, while human personality seen across a continuum would perhaps become prismatic? Who can say? I throw the idea out. I can imagine a form which, if satisfied, might raise in human terms the problems of causality or indeterminacy And nothing very recherche either. Just an ordinary Girl Meets Boy Story.¹⁴

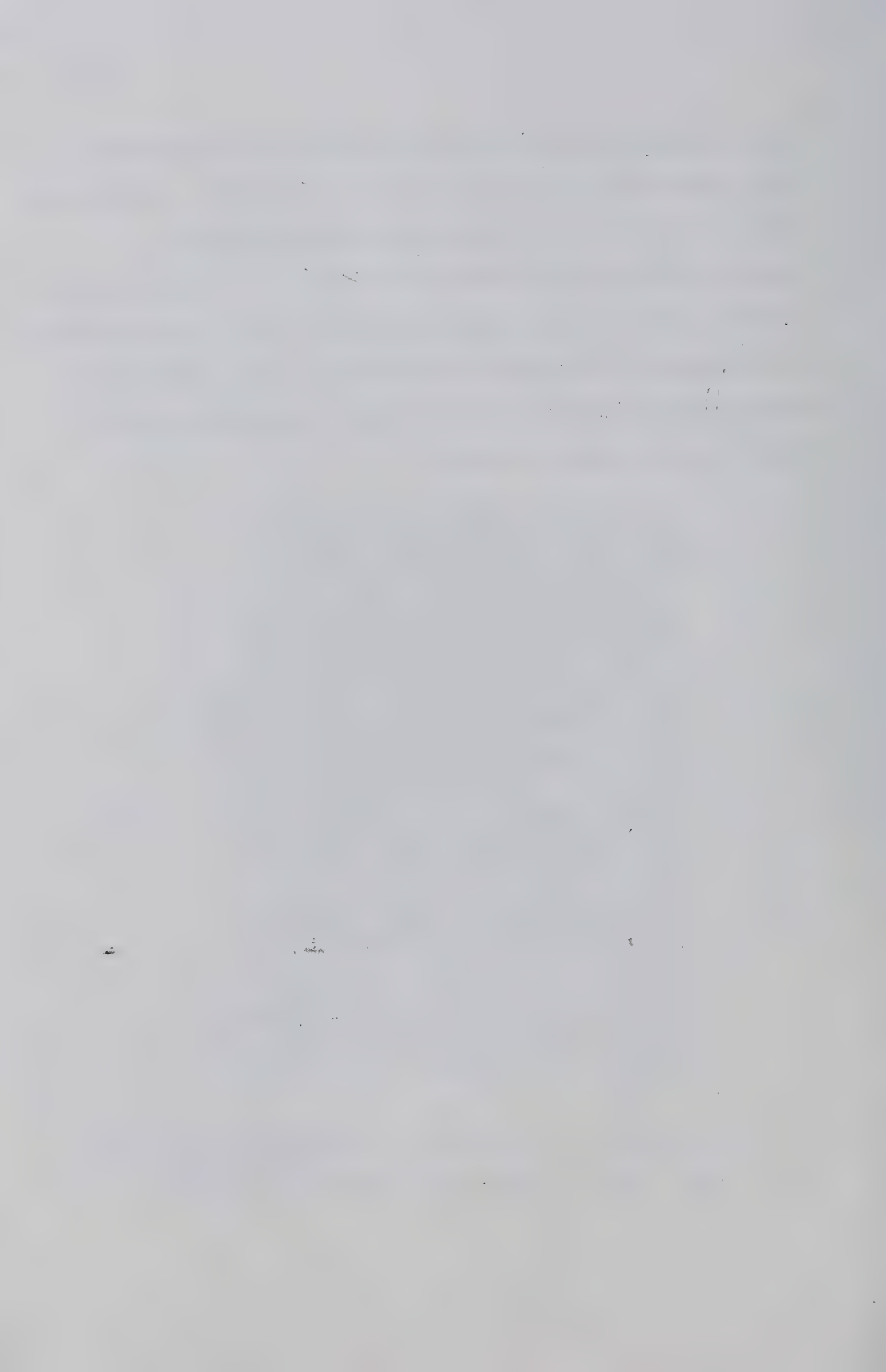
The essential point of Pursewarden's theory is that, 'if satisfied', the form would result in 'stereoscopic narrative', 'prismatic' characterisation à la Justine, and the raising in human terms of 'the problems of causality or indeterminacy'. 'Stereoscopic narrative' differs from 'prismatic' characterisation in that it implies action as the focus of narration, rather than character. But both are achieved in the juxtaposition of the Justine manuscript and the 'Great Interlinear' -- a record of the same events from a new narrative site allows not only another view of the action but also allows the characters involved in that action to 'show more than one profile at a time'.¹⁵

One is tempted to move immediately to the principle of 'causality or indeterminacy' as the crucial point in elucidating the relationship between Pursewarden's theory and the structure of The Alexandria Quartet, bypassing

the reference which Pursewarden makes to the content of his 'four-card trick in the form of a novel'. He proposes that the novel involve 'nothing very recherché Just an ordinary Girl Meets Boy Story' -- in other words, a "love story" of the commonest sort. But a recollection of Pursewarden recorded by Balthazar in the Interlinear would suggest that the "love story" Pursewarden has in mind is quite extraordinary.

'At the time when we knew him he was reading hardly anything but science. This for some reason annoyed Justine who took him to task for wasting his time in these studies. He defended himself by saying that the Relativity proposition was directly responsible for abstract painting, atonal music, and formless (or at any rate cyclic forms in) literature. Once it was grasped they were understood, too. He added: "In the Space and Time marriage we have the greatest Boy meets Girl story of the age. To our great-grandchildren this will be as poetical a union as the ancient Greek marriage of Cupid and Psyche seems to us. You see, Cupid and Psyche were facts to the Greeks, not concepts. Analogical as against analytical thinking! But the true poetry of the age and its most fruitful poem is the mystery which begins and ends with n".'16

Thus we have yet another 'purely scientific' connotation of the word "love", and we are forced to re-examine



Durrell's description of his Quartet as 'an investigation of modern love'.¹⁷ 'Modern' must now be seen as defined in opposition to 'ancient Greek', specifically in that 'the marriage of Space and Time' analogically parallels the 'marriage of Cupid and Psyche'. But in what way has Durrell adapted Einstein's 'marriage of Space and Time' to the structure of his novel? And in what way does the relationship of the parts of the Quartet analogically reflect the relationships of the characters who become involved in this 'ordinary Girl Meets Boy Story'? Our preoccupation at this point is with Durrell's theory of deployment, so we shall leave the second question until later in this chapter.

We have seen that Durrell is concerned with creating a situation which allows each of his characters to 'show more than one profile at a time', and that each profile recorded by a narrator 'is conditioned by [his] position in space and time'. In other words, 'the picture which each observer makes of the world is in some degree subjective. Even if different observers all take their picture at the same moment of time, and from the same point in space, these pictures will not be alike . . .'.¹⁸ There is nothing especially new in this theory, but we must note that a growing awareness of its existence and

validity is the basis for Darley's reaction to the 'Great Interlinear' in Balthazar. The recording of "facts" in Justine is based solely upon Darley's presupposition that they do really exist as discrete "things" which can be recorded with a high degree of accuracy. Darley is here following the concepts of determinism -- he manifests a belief in the causality to which Pursewarden refers above.

In part two of the Quartet, however, Darley is faced with certain new "data" which suggest that the views he expressed in Justine were incomplete. He then comes to question causality and, ultimately, discard it.

Causality is the hypothesis that a precisely determined set of conditions will always produce the same effects at a later time. Classical physics was based on firm belief both in philosophical causality and in the idea that the precise determination of the initial conditions was possible in principle. The impossibility of such precise determination is a basic result of quantum mechanics.¹⁹

What Darley is forced to question when reading Balthazar's annotations to the Justine manuscript is his original supposition that he was able to accurately describe both character and action -- 'the idea that the precise determination of the initial conditions was possible'. He finds that such determination is in fact impossible;

that he had not at any time been fully aware of the conditions which determined the actions of his characters. While Darley is not aware of quantum mechanics, Durrell has succeeded in sweeping aside causality for the moment and can move toward an application of the principle of indeterminacy to the theory of narration.

The principle of indeterminacy was proposed by Heisenberg in 1927 as the "uncertainty principle".²⁰ The view of its importance which Durrell puts forward in his Key to Modern Poetry does much to clarify the way in which Pursewarden's proposed new form 'might raise in human terms the problems of causality or indeterminacy'.

Another aspect of the Relativity theory is the manner in which it sidetracks causality. Our belief in causality is a very strongly grounded one. We live by it. It has for generations been regarded as the bedrock of philosophy. Until today only the mystic or the saint has dared to disown it as part of the behaviour of matter, which he claims is an 'illusion'. But is it possible to think in other terms than those dictated by a belief in causality? If I plant a seed a tree will grow and not a man. Why not a man? Because . . . you know as well as I do. Yet the new theory of the physicists invites us to modify this conception if not actually to question its validity.

So far as phenomena are concerned, we are told, the uniformity of nature disappears. The Principle of Indeterminacy, as it is called, is founded upon the theory that we cannot observe the course of nature without disturbing it. This is the complete opposite of the strict determinism which has reigned in science up to now²¹

Thus the attempt which Durrell has consciously made to 'turn the novel through both subjective and objective modes' is clear -- it is a response to 'the theory that we cannot observe the course of nature without disturbing it'. The observer and the observed, the subject and the object, are no longer mutually distinct, which negates the premise upon which the writing of Justine was based.

Finally, we must consider the significance of Pursewarden's remark, '"But the true poetry of the age and its most fruitful poem is the mystery which begins and ends with n". The reference here is to the mathematical shorthand in which the general number in a series is denoted as "n". Thus, for example, "1, 2, 3, ...n", where "n" can be any number in the series. Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that we have a novel in which there are four narrative sites from which the action is described: "1, 2, 3, 4". Then the

narrator who is narrating at a precise moment may be denoted mathematically as "n", in keeping with the terms outlined above. This is a finite series. But the same is true of an infinite series of narrators, "1, 2, 3, 4, ∞ ", where "n" can be any narrator in that series. Thus Balthazar:

'To intercalate realities is the only way to be faithful to Time, for at every moment in Time the possibilities are endless in their multiplicity. Life consists in the act of choice. The perpetual reservations of judgement and the perpetual choosing.'²²

'Each fact can have a thousand motivations; all equally valid, and each fact a thousand faces. So many truths which have little to do with fact! Your duty [as a writer] is to hunt them down. At each moment of time all multiplicity waits at your elbow.'²³

Here, then, is the principle of indeterminacy as Durrell adapts it to the technique of narration in The Alexandria Quartet. Here is Justine's theory of 'prism-sightedness' and Balthazar's new 'form' for the novel. And, finally, here is the rationale behind Pursewarden's view that 'We live lives based upon selected fictions'. We can now see that the technique of spatial deployment used to structure the Quartet is dependent upon the physical positioning

of the narrator(s) in each of the parts. It is this positioning which fulfills the various theories put forward by Justine, Balthazar, Pursewarden and Darley in the text of the novel, and by the author himself in his "Notes".

The 'three sides of space and one of time [which] constitute the soup-mix recipe of a continuum' are, as we noted earlier, a concrete metaphor used to characterise spatial deployment and hence narrative placing in the Quartet. As Durrell points out in his Key to Modern Poetry,

The physicist deplores any attempt to deal with space-time in metaphors. Relativity, he claims, is a purely mathematical theory and can only be understood by mathematicians. In spite of this several eminent men of science have made an attempt to describe the theory of Relativity in non-technical terms.²⁴

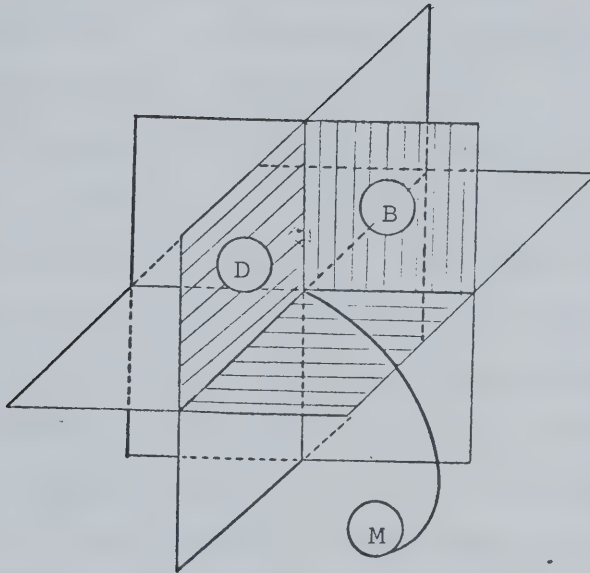
Durrell himself, of course, in attempting to write a novel based on the space-time continuum, was also attempting to create a metaphor which illustrates Relativity. Thus we are in good company in proposing a model with which to illustrate spatial deployment in the Quartet.

The model which we will adopt is a fittingly

mathematical one, the now-classic octant division of space (see Fig. 1). This concept is completely compatible with a discussion of Relativity, as Taylor and Wheeler's use of an essentially identical model in discussing Spacetime Physics shows.²⁵ The octant division of space is achieved by using two vertical and one horizontal planes which intersect at a midpoint equidistant from the sides of each. In this way space is divided into eight distinct and equal areas or "octants", an octant being defined in each case by any three (3) abutting planes (see shaded area). In terms of the novel, we may take Alexandria as the total site of the action. We are at this point concerned only with the relationship of the first three parts of the novel and, as they involve the same time period, we remain true to the theory, in which time is taken as being defined by movement in space. As we have already noted, narration is limited by position in space and time. Since in parts one through three time is common, we can move to the positioning of narrators.

In terms of the octant theory, an observer situated in one of the planes is limited in his observation to those two octants which his plane helps to define.

Figure 1: NARRATIVE SITING IN OCTANT DIVISION OF SPACE



D -- Narrator of Part 1

B -- Narrator of Part 2

M -- Narrator of Part 3

In other words, he can only observe and therefore report what occurs in the octants which are at right angles to the plane in which he is situated. Darley is thus limited in this way as narrator of Justine. However, it is possible for two observers (in this case) to share an octant or field of observation if the second observer is situated in one of the other two planes which define that octant. Thus, as the 'Great Interlinear' shows, Balthazar has shared a field of observation with Darley. There are therefore two explanations for the differences between what Darley and Balthazar have recorded. The first explanation is Durrell's own: 'the picture which each observer makes of the world is in some degree subjective'.²⁶ The second explanation is that, in terms of the octant theory, Darley cannot observe what has occurred in the second octant which Balthazar's plane helps to form. Therefore, Balthazar's annotations to the Justine manuscript are products, not only of his subjectivity, but also of the narrative site from which he has made his observations, and those annotations must necessarily cause Darley to amend his own record if he is to achieve a more complete picture of the action.

Parts one and two of The Alexandria Quartet are

Durrell's illustration of the principle of indeterminacy -- they form two of the 'three sides of space' to which Durrell refers in his "Note" to Balthazar. Part three, Mountolive, should logically be the third 'side', and this would be true if the narrative site employed therein merely provided a second qualification of the material recorded in the Justine manuscript. If Darley is the narrator of part three, and if this is '[the] new book -- [the] new Alexandria' which he decided to write after reading Balthazar's *Interlinear*,²⁷ then our discussion is at an end. But Mountolive is not simply a qualification of the Justine manuscript, and Darley is not clearly the narrator. On the one hand, Mountolive provides information of which Darley could not have been aware; on the other, to assume that Darley is the narrator is to allow him a second narrative site during the same time period, which is by definition impossible. Instead, the narrative technique employed in part three is that of the "omniscient" narrator.

The observation point of the omniscient narrator has traditionally been viewed in terms of the principle of causality. Unlike the first person narrator, the omniscient narrator could not be involved in the cause-

and-effect relationships which were seen as determining the action of the novel; otherwise, he could not have maintained his omniscience. Thus his observation point was characterised by being physically situated outside the limitations of space. Further, he was endowed with an eternality which nullified the limitations of time from which his characters necessarily suffered. In dealing with The Alexandria Quartet, however, we are dealing with action viewed from the standpoint of the principle of indeterminacy rather than that of causality. We have seen how that principle operates in the relationship of the material of Justine and the annotations of Balthazar. Yet the function of the omniscient narrator in the 'straight naturalistic novel' which is Mountolive is identical to the same function in, say, Cefalù^u. Thus we must reconcile the traditional role of the omniscient narrator with the new principle upon which Durrell has based his novel. In so doing we shall redefine the narrative site from which the omniscient narrator observes the action described in Mountolive.

The three planes of the octant theory may be extended infinitely and, theoretically, so may the time period defined by movement in the eight octants which

those three planes form. Spatially and temporally, then, the possibilities of the octant model are infinite. Consequently, the omniscient narrator cannot be physically positioned somewhere outside that model. Unlike Darley or Balthazar, his narrative site cannot be positioned in one of the planes, for he must retain his omniscience. Logically, therefore, his narrative site is at the point of intersection of the planes (see Fig. 1). A narrator positioned at this point would be able to see into all eight octants and would be truly omniscient. Furthermore, because time in the octant model is defined by movement in space and the narrative site is extraspatial, the narrator of Mountolive is not subject to time. Thus the omniscient narrator of part three retains his traditional characteristics. His observation point has simply been redefined in terms of the principle of indeterminacy as illustrated by the octant division of space.

Following Durrell's "Note" to Balthazar, we have seen that -- spatially and temporally -- the first three parts of the Quartet are indeed siblings rather than sequels. The action which is recorded in those parts defines the time period which they encompass, in keeping with the principles of Relativity. In fact, Darley

actually states that he intends to record events in the order in which they become significant, rather than chronologically.²⁸ 'The fourth part alone will represent time and be a true sequel.' Thus, in dealing with Clea as sequel, we are dealing with time viewed in spatial terms.

In terms of our discussion of narrator siting in Justine, Balthazar and Mountolive, we may say that the spatial pattern formed by the interaction of the characters is what signifies the temporal terminus a quo . . . quem in those volumes. Darley is a part of that pattern in Justine and influences its nature, and when he leaves Alexandria the pattern is concluded for him and thus for his reader. At the beginning of Clea, Darley is still thinking temporally rather than spatially, and while his early statements are consequently coloured by the old sense of the division of space and time, there are nevertheless some clues which relate to Clea as sequel in the new sense of spacetime unity.

But then . . . if I had changed, what of my friends -- Balthazar, Nessim, Justine, Clea? What new aspects of them would I discern after this time-lapse, when once more I had been caught up in the ambience of a new city, a city now swallowed by a war? Here was

the rub. I could not say.
 Apprehension trembled within
 me like a lodestar. It was
 hard to renounce the hard-won
 territory of my dreams in
 favour of new images, new
 cities, new dispositions, new
 loves.²⁹

While still bound by a now-archaic concept, Darley has learned from the evidence of Balthazar's Interlinear, and the 'new aspects' to which he refers may be interpreted in the spatial sense, especially as he is about to resume a place in the space which is Alexandria in order to be the narrator of part four. Similarly, 'new dispositions' hints strongly at the rearranging of the characters of parts one through three into a new spatial pattern which will signify a new time period. Part four is a return to the first person narrative technique of one and two, and Darley is once more a part of the action he describes. But the old pattern no longer obtains: Melissa is dead; Balthazar is in disrepute; Scobie is dead and sanctified;³⁰ Nessim has lost his great wealth. Thus Darley shows us a new pattern among his characters when he re-enters Alexandria and begins to observe and record anew, and Clea becomes 'a true [temporal] sequel'.

Consideration of some further ramifications of Durrell's technique is in order before we pass on to

other aspects of the Quartet. For example, Pursewarden's "Conversations With Brother Ass", those monologues which compose Chapter II, Book II of Clea, deserve much greater attention than we are able to give them here. They are the philosophical core of the novel and are directly linked with the series of lectures which Durrell published as a Key to Modern Poetry. Pursewarden supplies the metaphor which most clearly indicates Durrell's intent in structuring the novel, and at the same time validates the use we have made of the octant model in discussing that structure. 'Come,' he says to Brother Ass (Darley), 'let us collaborate on a four- or five-decker job, shall we? In this way we will put a lid on a box with no sides!'³¹ Surely the 'box with no sides' is akin to our octant model which, while it is box-shaped, is also infinite and therefore boundless. And The Alexandria Quartet is an attempt to 'put a lid' on that box -- an attempt to capture the spacetime concept and its principle of indeterminacy in the novel form.

Finally, we should reconsider the notion of volumetric time which we first examined in Chapter II. In our discussion of Panic Spring we noted Durrell's

rejection of linear time for a concept of time expressed in spatial and volumetric terms. A passage from Dunsany's The King of Elfland's Daughter provided the structuring metaphor for our discussion of time, and we shall quote part of that excerpt again in order to see more clearly its relationship to the spacetime structure of the Quartet.

I have said that no time passed
at all in Elfland. Yet the
happening of events is in itself
a manifestation of time; and no
event can occur unless time pass.³²

We pointed out at the time that Dunsany's statement involved a contradiction stemming from his attempt to define volumetric time in linear terms. The passage quoted above contains that contradiction, but a slight change in wording allows us to resolve the problem while retaining Dunsany's meaning. Substitute "no time can pass unless an event occur" for 'no event can occur unless time pass', and the relationship between Dunsany's pool image and the octant model upon which we based our discussion becomes clear. The same basic concepts apply in both.

The structure of The Alexandria Quartet is thus a logical development of concepts with which Durrell

had been concerned for some twenty years, and which he had explored in the final two volumes of his early trilogy and in Cefalu. But it is also the answer to the question with which the whole problem began. In the "Epilogue" to Pied Piper of Lovers, Walsh Clifton asks Turnbull, 'How in hell can I express the volume of things by daubing ink on paper?'³³ Through adapting the principles of Relativity to the novel, Durrell finally discovered a mode of expressing that sense of volume which he had been seeking since his first novel.

The Feminine Principle in The Alexandria Quartet.

As Gerald Sykes has noted, The Black Book may be seen in many respects as a preliminary to The Alexandria Quartet.³⁴ Of the multitude of references to women in that third novel, the most significant to our present study are those which clearly indicate the importance of the feminine principle to the world which Durrell is creating. In this vein, the closest textual parallel between the two works involves a passage from The Black Book which makes coitus an act of worship, and a passage from the Quartet which explicates the early section. Thus in the first case we have

Perez cherishing his clubbed penis,
and handing it casually to Hilda,

as one might give up one's ticket
at the terminus. Without a sigh or
a word handing up his ticket and
entering the cathedral on his knees.³⁵

And then there is Balthazar, reflecting on the nature of
psychology. 'Amaril tried in his clumsy way to analyse
me,' he says,

-- but what is one to say of this
very approximate science which has
carelessly overflowed into anthro-
pology on one side, theology on the
other? There is much they do not
know as yet: for instance that
one kneels in church because one
kneels to enter a woman³⁶

Significantly, however, the passage from the Quartet
stresses the position of the male during coitus as the
source for rather than merely analogous to the act of
worship.

Now, as we saw in Chapter Three, the relationship
of the individual to nature is symbolised by the sexual
act -- the dissolution of the ego in palingenesis, or
union with the cosmic "One", is achieved symbolically
in the act of intercourse. And so it is that we are
presented with

the great luminous symbol of the
cunt, glowing softly in history
like the Grail, the genesis of
the living, the blithe cushion of
life.³⁷

In our discussion of Cefalu^u, we noted the significance of the plateau on Crete as 'the roof of the world', and pointed out its relationship to Ruth Adams in particular and the feminine principle in general. Here Durrell created the plateau on which the Trumans achieve self-realization in direct relation to 'the great luminous symbol of the cunt' which he had earlier personified in 'Hilda lying there like Tibet, glowing in her convalescent secrecy among the snow-bound craters and jewels' in The Black Book.³⁸

In The Alexandria Quartet, however, the stress is less on the act of worship involved in sexual intercourse than on the importance of sex per se. The parallel with the Christian religion is discarded in favour of a non-sectarian religiosity the meaning of which is hinted at by Pursewarden.

If once we could loosen up, relax
the terrible grip of the so-called
Kingdom of Heaven which has made
the earth such a blood-soaked place,
we might rediscover in sex the key
to a metaphysical search which is
our raison d'être^u here below!³⁹

The influence of the 'Kingdom of Heaven' toward which the western consciousness strives is seen in Cefalu^u as manifested in the weapons of war which had quite for-

tuitously landed by parachute on 'the roof of the world'.⁴⁰ Similarly in the Quartet, the warships in the harbour at Alexandria are a manifestation of the human will which is a product of the conscious seeking of union with the "One".⁴¹ In both cases, destruction is the logical result of the denegation of the body and the emphasizing of the spiritual as seen both in St. Paul and in Descartes' theory of the mind-body duality. The irony of this paradox is carried forward into the meaning of "sex" -- just as the search for the 'Kingdom of Heaven' results in destruction, so the physical union of intercourse is characterised by a word the Latin root of which ("secare") means "to cut". The principle of indeterminacy which informs the structure of the Quartet has as its corollary the necessity of accepting two opposing ideas as simultaneously true,⁴² and the key to the 'metaphysical search which is our raison d'être here below' lies in a physical act.

In this sense, then, the 'eternally tragic and ludicrous' position of coupling human beings⁴³ is neither tragic nor ludicrous, but a manifestation of a search for truth which takes on certain Keatsian overtones when described by Capodistria, the true sensualist of the

novel. Speaking of Pursewarden's latest novel, Da Capo says,

"I have been thinking over the character of Parr the sensualist. He resembles me so closely. His apology for a voluptuary's life is fantastically good -- as in the passage where he says that people only see in us the contemptible skirt-fever which rules our actions but completely miss the beauty-hunger underlying it. To be so struck by a face sometimes that one wants to devour it feature by feature. Even making love to the body beneath it gives no surcease, no rest."⁴⁴

In the light of the importance of sexual intercourse to 'the metaphysical search' discussed above, it is possible to see in these lines a sensualist's interpretation of Keats's "Beauty is truth, truth beauty", and Capodistria's decision to pursue truth along Paracelsian lines later in the novel⁴⁵ is not in the least out of character. For Da Capo, the pursuit of truth is paramount -- it is simply the means which changes.

All of the major characters in the Quartet either begin their pursuit of truth in the sensual realm or at some point investigate the possibilities of sex as an avenue of exploration. Pursewarden's remarks to Justine on the subject of her repeated affairs do much to clarify this point.

'He said to her one night: "You see, Justine, I believe that Gods are men and men Gods; they intrude on each other's lives, trying to express themselves through each other -- hence such apparent confusion in our human states of mind, our intimation of powers within or beyond us And then (listen) I think that very few people realize that sex is a psychic and not a physical act. The clumsy coupling of human beings is simply a biological paraphrase of this truth -- a primitive method of introducing minds to each other, engaging them. But most people are struck in the physical aspect, unaware of the poetic rapport which it so clumsily tries to teach. That is why all your dull repetitions of the same mistake are simply like a boring great multiplication table, and will remain so until you get your head out of the paper bag and start to think responsibly."46

Justine is unable to see the true importance of her own words, "'I've always thought of acts as messages, wishes from the past to the future, which invited self-discovery".'47 As Pursewarden suggests, until she comes to understand the implicit message of her own repeated and seemingly promiscuous acts of intercourse, she will never experience self-awareness and self-realization.

But while we must view Justine as a character who, like the rest, is intent on self-discovery, we must also see her role in relation to the rest of the characters

in the novel as intentionally symbolic.

Clea once said of her. . .: 'The true whore is man's real darling -- like Justine; she alone has the capacity to wound men.'⁴⁸

Even more than Darley's Melissa, Justine embodies the nature of the prostitute in the Quartet, for she is a means of self-exploration for Darley and, in part, for Pursewarden. Like Hilda in The Black Book, the importance of the prostitute in the novel is in her role as the personification of 'the genesis of the living, the blithe cushion of life'. For Darley, each prostitute's booth is like 'a shrine' where they sit 'on three-legged stools like oracles wearing carpet slippers'.⁴⁹ We shall return to the religious implications of these lines, but here we must note that the prostitute is seen as acting as a substitute for the woman each man chooses as his medium for self-exploration. Surprising Narouz with one of these "priestesses", Darley recalls, 'I took the rusty bed-rail in my hands and stared down, not on them for I was hardly conscious of their existence, but upon myself and Melissa, myself and Justine'.⁵⁰

And this woman, with her 'black spokes of toiling hair', that lay in Narouz' arms -- would Clea or Justine recognize themselves in a mother-image of themselves woven

out of moneyed flesh? Narouz was drinking Clea thirstily out of this old body hired for pleasure, just as I myself wished only to drink Justine.⁵¹

So it is that, whether with the chosen female figure or with a substitute, the act of worship which is the act of sexual intercourse remains the same, and each man returns to 'the blithe cushion of life' in his search for self-identity. This is the symbolic role of Justine in the Quartet, and even Pursewarden's sarcastic remark to her -- '"Oh, stop behaving like a pious old sin-cushion into which we all have to stick rusty pins of our admiration . . ."',⁵² -- contains implicitly the germ of truth.

During her marriage to Arnauti, the author of Moeurs (from which Darley quotes at some length), Justine was psychoanalysed and the problem of her sexual affairs was diagnosed at one point as nymphomania. Interestingly enough, Magnani, the psychoanalyst, said to Arnauti, '"Nymphomania may be considered another form of virginity if you wish".'⁵³ This is an extension of the passage from Groddeck's The World of Man which, as we saw in Chapter Three, informs so much of what Durrell has to say about the feminine principle.

Those who have learned that there is an eternal female quality, quite apart from its embodiment in any individual woman, will also know that in spite of any bodily experience, in spite of love-affairs or even motherhood, this essence of womanhood is unchangeably virginal.⁵⁴

Once again, Pursewarden's sarcastic characterisation of Justine to Balthazar as "a tiresome old sexual turnstile through which presumably we must all pass - a somewhat vulpine Alexandrian Venus",⁵⁵ -- is true to the mark. For, as Darley becomes aware, the essence of what Justine embodies is much older than 'the idea of love [which] was formed in the fragmented psyche of European man' and 'which nourished a literature of affectation whose subject-matter would otherwise have belonged to religion -- its true sphere of operation'.⁵⁶ If the prostitutes of Alexandria are "priestesses" who keep the 'shrines' at which men worship, then Justine is the symbol of the feminine principle which has been worshipped at various times as Ishtar, Isis, Venus and Aphrodite.

'After all,' as Clea points out to Darley, 'Justine cannot be justified or excused. She simply and magnificently is; we have to put up with her, like original sin.

But to call her a nymphomaniac or

to try and Freudianise her, my dear,
 takes away all her mythical substance
 -- the only thing she really is.
 Like all amoral people she verges
 on the Goddess. If our world were
 a world there would be temples to
 accomodate her where she would find
 the peace she was seeking.⁵⁷

Arnauti came to a similar conclusion when he became aware that Justine 'was not really a woman but the incarnation of Woman',⁵⁸ and Balthazar's remark -- '"all our women are Justines, you know, in different styles",⁵⁹ -- is similarly revealing.

In the same way, Justine is all women, as Arnauti sensed at their first meeting.⁶⁰ In that early passage from Moeurs, in which the author meets Claudia/Justine in a mirror before a dance, there is a slight hint that Durrell intends to employ the traditional association of the sun and the masculine, the moon and the feminine, in his exploration of the male-female relationship. But it is not until Clea that this use is made clear. Ruminating on the nature of Justine, Darley says,

She was, like every woman, everything that the mind of a man (let us define 'man' as a poet perpetually conspiring against himself) -- that the mind of a man wished to imagine. She was there forever, and she had never existed! Under all these masks there was only another woman, every woman, like a lay figure in a dressmaker's

shop, waiting for the poet to
 clothe her, breathe life into her.
 In understanding all this for the
 first time I began to realize with
 awe the enormous reflexive power of
 woman -- the fecund passivity with
 which, like the moon, she borrows
 her second-hand light from the male
 sun.⁶¹

The reference is obvious. Justine is the Goddess personified as Diana, the moon, and hence the deity of the pre-Christian religions.⁶² And, consequently, she is also the twentieth-century personification of the forces of regeneration in the natural world. Seen in relation to the dominant Christian religion, Justine characterises her true nature when she says to Nessim, '"How did you know that I exist only for those who believe in me?"',⁶³ Significantly, it is immediately after this remark that Nessim sees in her 'the absolute feminine submissiveness which is one of the strongest forces in the world'. In the symbolic nature of Justine, in her personification of the feminine principle as it is traditionally embodied in the Goddess, 'the austere mindless primitive face of Aphrodite' looks out at the reader from the pages of The Alexandria Quartet.⁶⁴

Arnauti's first real contact with Justine occurs after 'the hazards of one of those awful English dances, called the Paul Jones . . . , left [him] facing her for

a waltz'.⁶⁵ Much later, in Balthazar, Darley records the significance of this particular dance.

Round and round the floor we went,
the women unconsciously following
the motion of the stars, of the
earth as it curved into space; and
then suddenly like a declaration
of war, like an expulsion from the
womb, silence came, and a voice
crying: 'Take your partners
please'.⁶⁶

This is a direct echo from the passage in Prospero's Cell (1945), the first of Durrell's island books, in which he describes the trance-like state of the Corcyrean dancers as they whirl through the circular dances which Theodore Stephanides calls 'star dances'. "I read somewhere [, he says,] that dancing originated in a desire to imitate the movement of celestial bodies".⁶⁷ Durrell has transposed the colour and the costumes of the Corcyrean peasant dance to the Alexandrian ballroom and 'the glitter of jewelry and the rustle of silks', but the import remains the same. Like the Corfiots, the Alexandrians are treading out the measure of the universe, and it is significant that in Darley's description of the Paul Jones it is the women specifically who follow 'the motion of the stars, of the earth', for each in her own way is a Justine, an embodiment of the Goddess and hence of the forces in nature

which the dance seeks to imitate.

Now, just as Pursewarden provides the key to the structure of the Quartet, so too does he provide the basic thematic statement. The topic of all artists, he tells 'Brother Ass',

is the same, always and irremediably the same -- I spell the word for you: l-o-v-e. Four letters, each letter a volume! But in my conception of the four-letter word . . . I am somewhat bold and sweeping. I mean the whole bloody range -- from the little greenstick fractures of the heart right up to its higher spiritual connivance with the . . . well, the absolute ways of nature.⁶⁸

In one sense -- in Darley's case, for example -- Justine embodies the 'greenstick fractures' as an individual woman as well as 'the absolute ways of nature' in her symbolic role as the Goddess, and it is in his relationship with her that Darley experiences 'the whole bloody range' of connotations which Pursewarden applies to the word 'love'.

Now, as we saw in Chapter Four, Ruth Adams' definition of 'love' in Cefalú[^] is centred on the natural world and the necessity of the individual coming to terms with it. That coming to terms with the forces of nature is

the 'high spiritual connivance [of the heart] with . . . the absolute ways of nature' of which Pursewarden speaks. Further, the means by which one reaches that union with nature is, for Ruth Adams, quiet and physical calm. So, when Pursewarden describes to Clea the power which he feels underlies and can be used to structure human existence, he is expanding upon Ruth Adams' comments in Cefalû.

"I feel I want to sound a note of . . . affirmation -- though not in the specific terms of a philosophy or religion. It should have the curvature of an embrace, the wordlessness of a lover's code. It should convey some feeling that the world we live in is founded in something too simple to be over-described as cosmic law -- but as easy to grasp as, say, an act of tenderness, simple tenderness in the primal relation between animal and plant, rain and soil, seed and trees, man and God. A relationship so delicate that it is all too easily broken by the inquiring mind

After all, this is not simply what we most need in the world, but really what describes the state of pure process in it. Keep silent awhile and you feel a comprehension of this act of tenderness"69

There is a clear relationship between 'the state of pure process' which Pursewarden sees in the world and the concepts of Relativity which inform the structure of the novel and which we examined earlier in this chapter.

When the principle of causality has been set aside, as Durrell suggests it has been by the principle of indeterminacy, a predetermined series of events is impossible and, without the possibility of a causal relationship to inform the viewpoint of the observer, that observer is left simply with what Pursewarden calls 'the state of pure process' -- the reality of existence as against the unreality of a world the view of which is still tempered by the assumptions of causality.

The relationship of 'the state of pure process' to 'the heraldic universe' and the growth of the artist will be a part of our discussion in the next section of this chapter. Remembering that the nature of time was very much a question in our earlier discussion of 'the heraldic universe', and remembering, too, that the forces inherent in the natural world are personified throughout Durrell's work in the ancient deities, we may close this consideration of the importance of the feminine principle in The Alexandria Quartet with the following particularly apt expressions of these basic concepts.

Yet I must in this last book insist
 [, says Pursewarden,] that there is
 hope for man, scope for man, within
 the boundaries of a simple law; and
 I seem to see mankind as gradually
 appropriating to itself the necessary

information through mere attention, not reason, which may one day enable it to live within the terms of such an idea -- the true meaning of "joy unconfined". How could joy be anything else? This new creature we artists are hunting for will not "live" so much as, like time itself, simply "elapse".⁷⁰

The life is hard, but good. What pleasure to actually sweat over a task, actually use one's hands! And while [Darley and his friends] are harvesting steel to raise, membrane by membrane, this delicate mysterious ex-voto to the sky -- why the vines are ripening too with their reminder that long after man has stopped his neurotic fiddling with the death-bringing tools with which he expresses his fear of life, the old dark gods are there, underground, buried in the moist humus of the chthonian world (that favourite world of P[ursewarden]). They are forever sited in the human wish. They will never capitulate!⁷¹

The Growth of the Artist in The Alexandria Quartet.

In Chapter Four we saw that, among several characters who come to terms with reality and with their selves in Cefalú[^], the clearest statements of the process involve Campion and the Trumans. There seems to be no obvious relationship between the artist and the lower class, however, aside from the common goal which they reach. But the relationship is there: in his art, Campion has found an avenue of self-exploration which he has almost travelled when the cave-in occurs, while

the Trumans only really begin their exploration after they are trapped in the labyrinth.

Now, the attitude which Campion has to women is really one of surfeit. He no longer needs women as a means of self-exploration, for he has passed beyond sex and has come to view his work as a viable medium for resolving his problems. In the same way, Pursewarden -- who is Campion on a far grander scale -- has passed beyond the need for exploration founded in sex, for he has realized the importance of the feminine principle. In Balthazar's words,

As for Pursewarden, he believed with Rilke that no woman adds anything to the sum of Woman, and from satiety he had now taken refuge in the plenty of the imagination -- the true field of merit for the artist.⁷²

And it is with the artist that we are concerned, for the greater part of The Alexandria Quartet is a record of the growth of the artist -- in particular, Darley. At the same time, three of the four volumes are a means of self-exploration, for in Justine, Balthazar and Clea we are very much aware of Darley as narrator trying to come to grips with his own inner self by means of the writing.

As Darley attempts to do on his island, the writer

takes a stance somewhere between his field of observation and the work which he creates out of it. There is a mode of translation, involving both heart and mind, which allows the writer to transform what he has observed into what his imagination makes of it. And the writer who is still using his work as a means of exploration suspects that, at the heart of existence, there is a 'portentous pattern' like the one which Marlowe failed to find in Panic Spring. In other words, he believes with Pursewarden that 'the world we live in is founded in something too simple to be over-described as cosmic law -- but as easy to grasp as, say, an act of tenderness'.⁷³ So, for the writer whose work is still both a means and a record of the search for that pattern, the work is of paramount importance until it is finished -- then it is of no use, and he must pass on to another work and another attempt to find and express what he believes to be the truth which underlies experience.

The motive force behind the work of the writer is thus the simultaneous search for and expression of the goal. But as the writer progresses -- as he reaches certain personal conclusions about himself -- he becomes more aware of the larger outline of what he is seeking.

Pursewarden came close enough to realise that it could not be dealt with 'in the specific terms of a philosophy or religion', and he was able to describe it very roughly as 'tenderness'. For Clea, although she has not at this point reached Pursewarden's level of awareness, the motivation of the artist is more fundamental than simply search and expression.

Underneath all [the artist's] preoccupations with sex, society, religion, etc. (all the staple abstractions which allow the forebrain to chatter) there is, quite simply, a man tortured beyond endurance by the lack of tenderness in the world.⁷⁴

At this point in the novel, Clea is concerned solely with the world which is the artist's field of observation, and we must view her remarks with that in mind. Nonetheless, the striking similarity between her views and Pursewarden's gives us some idea, not only of what Durrell wishes us to see as the motive force in art, but also of the importance of art per se.

That importance is two-fold: on the one hand, the artist is concerned with the significance of his work in relation to his exploration of self; on the other, the work must finally stand alone as an attempt at communi-

cation with his audience and, presumably, it must be of some significance to them. Now, dependent upon the author, there may or may not be a didactic purpose in the work apart from the enjoyment which it provides. In Durrell's work, as we have seen, there is usually to be found some purpose beyond entertainment. In The Black Book, and more particularly in Cefalù, Durrell was attempting to put before his reader certain basic "truths", and the latter novel he clearly considered 'an extended morality'. Thus we must consider that any statements his characters make about the purpose of art will be coloured by his own views. So Pursewarden writes,

About Art I always tell myself: -
 while they are watching the
 firework display, yclept Beauty,
 you must smuggle the truth into
 their veins like a filter-passing
 virus! This is easier said than
 done.⁷⁵

The purpose and importance of art, then, is that, inas-
 much as it contains 'the truth', its properties are
 curative. And the reference to 'a filter-passing
 virus' is significant because it specifies the effect
 of art: like the 'filter-passing virus', art and the
 'truth' which it carries cannot be stopped and will

permeate the minds of the audience.

The writing in itself must consequently be an act of tenderness, for the artist wishes to cure the ills of a people who are not aware of their illness and who, furthermore, treat their "physicians" very badly.

We artists [says Darley,] form one of those pathetic human chains which human beings form to pass buckets of water up to a fire, or to bring in a lifeboat. An uninterrupted chain of humans born to explore the inward riches of the solitary life on behalf of the unheeding unforgiving community⁷⁶

The tenderness itself is manifested in the paradoxical situation which Darley points out here, and which Durrell himself has voiced. Even though Durrell had discovered that, in England, 'all as poets were pariahs',⁷⁷ he told an interviewer, 'If I'm writing I'm writing for England -- and so long as I write English it will be for England that I have to write'.⁷⁸ So the act of writing becomes, in a sense, an act of sacrifice: the artist, by exploring his own inner self and recording that exploration in his work, hopes to yield to his community a means by which it can resolve its own inner tensions without the struggle which he must undergo.

Pursewarden puts the case to Darley quite clearly.

Brother Ass, the so-called act of living is really an act of the imagination. The world -- which we always visualize as 'the outside' World -- yields itself only to self-exploration! Faced by this cruel, yet necessary paradox, the poet finds himself growing gills and a tail, the better to swim against the currents of unenlightenment. What appears to be perhaps an arbitrary act of violence is precisely the opposite, for by reversing process in this way, he unites the rushing, heedless stream of humanity to the still, tranquil, motionless, odourless, tasteless plenum from which its own motive essence is derived. If he were to abandon his rôle all hope of gaining a purchase on the slippery surface of reality would be lost, and everything in nature would disappear! But this act, the poetic act, will cease to be necessary when everyone can perform it for himself.⁷⁹

As Darley had been aware earlier, what obtains for the artist also applies to humanity as a whole. The attempt which the artist makes to come to grips with his own inner nature and thus with the "real" world is a potential possibility for all of mankind. 'I know,' he says, 'that the key I am trying to turn is in myself',⁸⁰ but as Campion points out to Fearmax in Cefalu, '"The equipment is lying like an unpressed switch in the heart of every man"'.⁸¹

Seen in this light, the purpose of art per se is to provide humanity with a means by which it can "press the switch" and transcend the surface reality, which is characterised by the striving of the will, to reach 'the still, tranquil . . . plenum' which underlies that reality and is 'the plenty of the imagination' in which Pursewarden took refuge. The application of art is seen in the Quartet in the quite different attempts which the Hosnani brothers, Nessim and Narouz, make to unite the Copts. The fact that Narouz is assassinated -- presumably on the orders of the Coptic hierarchy -- and his brother's militant approach fails is a clear example of the difficulties which the artist faces.

And then it slowly came upon
 [Nessim] that in a paradoxical
 sort of way Narouz was right in
 his desire to inflame the sleep-
 ing will -- for he saw the world,
 not so much as a political
 chessboard but as a pulse beat-
 ing within a greater will which
 only the poetry of the psalms
 could invoke and body forth.
 To awaken not merely the impulses
 of the forebrain with its limited
 formulations, but the sleeping
 beauty underneath -- the poetic
 consciousness which lay, coiled
 like a spring, in the heart of
 everyone.⁸²

Narouz' attempt, and the attempt of the artist, is to

provide humanity with a medium in which it may 'glimpse the idea of a universe at rest, a universe in love with itself'.⁸³ The basic reference to this process in the Quartet is to "growing up", and this is the purpose of art for the individual. 'Try to tell yourself,' says Pursewarden, 'that [art's] fundamental object was only to invoke the ultimate healing silence. . . . Then like a babe in arms you will "milk the universe with every breath".'⁸⁴ The struggle and the frustration of the attempt to communicate -- for the writer, the attempt to communicate precisely using the imprecise medium of language -- was a key point in The Black Book⁸⁵ which is reiterated in the Quartet by John Keats, the correspondent.⁸⁶ In the end, however, the writer must concentrate on his own personal development if he is to be successful in turning his own life into art. And he must live with the destruction of his work if that work has proved fruitless in his search. The fate of the Justine manuscript at the hands of Balthazar, as Darley becomes aware, exemplifies this process.

Perhaps then the destruction of
my private Alexandria was
necessary . . . ; perhaps buried
in all this there lies the germ
and substance of a truth . . .
which, if I can accomodate it,
will carry me a little further

in what is really a search for
my proper self.⁸⁷

Darley's move from Alexandria to his island in order to 're-work reality' was, as Clea points out to him, as much metaphoric as actual. As we noted earlier, this removal of the narrator from his field of observation symbolises the objective stance of the writer who must be removed from the source of his material in order to effectively transmute that material into art. In terms of the writer's struggle to "grow up", however, it also symbolises the growing separation between the writer and those other human beings who form the 'unheeding unforgiving community' for which he writes. For the writer must turn away from 'the common ties' if he is to find what is unique and therefore uncommon in himself, and it is to the child-like innocence which he has lost that, for Durrell, he must turn.

'One writes to recover a lost innocence,' Pursewarden tells Mountolive, and the whole of the Durrell canon makes this idea clear. Pied Piper of Lovers juxtaposes the happy Indian childhood of Walsh Clifton and the unhappy world of England to which he is sent, ending on a hopeful note when Clifton decides to go to Greece. In Panic Spring, the effects of England on the

individual are characterised by Christian Marlowe, but the effect of Greece on the other characters -- primarily Walsh Clifton -- sustains the hopeful note on which Pied Piper ends. Henry Miller's reaction to The Black Book indicates the importance of Greece for Durrell: 'Perhaps Corfu is nearer your climatic source,' he writes.⁸⁸ And the plateau on which the Trumans achieve self-realisation is definitely tied to Durrell's childhood, to his 'lost innocence', for it is 'the roof of the world', a clear reference to Tibet. As Durrell wrote Miller in 1937,

I think Tibet is for me what China is for you. I lived on the edge of it with a kind of nursery-rhyme happiness. I wanted to go one summer into the passes. They promised to take me. But I left without going -- alamort -- it is a kind of unreasoning disease when I think of it. I am illogical again like a child.⁸⁹

The 'island books' are a further chronicle of Durrell's attempts to 'recover [his] lost innocence', this time embodied in the 'unreasoning disease' which he calls 'islomania'.⁹⁰ Whether we choose to use Durrell's own term, 'Tibet', or not, we are forced to see the 'lost innocence' for which Darley and all of Durrell's other protagonists are searching as embodied in the

"islands of the Blessed" to which we referred in Chapter Two.

In our discussion of Panic Spring we noted a clear resemblance between the "worlds" which Durrell creates in his writing and the insulae fortunatae tradition. Specifically, the feeling of "otherworldliness" and the sense of timelessness apply in both. As Pursewarden points out to Justine, "I believe that Gods are men and men are Gods", and it is in the "islands of the Blessed" that the worlds of gods and men meet. Those who are transported to the insulae fortunatae may be said to be living out a myth, and this is one of the ways in which the recovery of the 'lost innocence' is described in Durrell's work. For example, in Cefalú[^], Campion says, "'I am spinning a myth about myself in a series of canvasses'" -- in other words, he is creating his own reality;⁹¹ and in the Quartet, after Darley has left Alexandria, 'It was amazing how quickly the human image was dissolving into the mythical image [Pursewarden] had created of himself'.⁹² Finally, there is a clear parallel between the situation of Campion in Cefalú[^] and that of Darley at the beginning of Clea. When the artist begins to create his own myth, Campion tells Fearmax,

You begin to loosen the ties of duty and obligation. If you have been a husband or a lover or a banker you renounce the role in order to withdraw more fully on to the stage of your own personal myth. You condense and refine. And when people you knew come up and take your hand, recalling incidents of ten years back, you wonder if they realize that they are talking to a corpse."⁹³

This is the situation of 'Lawrence Lucifer' in The Black Book, but taken one step further. There Durrell's persona considered that, in Greece, he would be "dead" so far as the English were concerned. In Cefalu^u, Campion feels that he has passed beyond one kind of "reality" to another state of being co-existent with the first, but timeless. And when Darley returns to Alexandria, he has reached a similar stage. 'I should see Alexandria again, I knew, in the elusive temporal fashion of a ghost -- for once you become aware of the operation of a time which is not calendar-time you become in some sort a ghost.'⁹⁴ In creating his own reality, in living the mythopaeic role of the artist, Darley thus reaches "the islands of the Blessed". As Henry Miller had pointed out to Durrell very early in their correspondence, 'The poem is the dream made flesh, in a two-fold sense: as a work of art, and as life itself, which is a work of

art. When man becomes fully conscious of his powers, his role, his destiny, he is an artist and ceases to struggle with reality.'⁹⁵

Art may thus be defined in this context as the means of self-exploration chosen by a given individual which is also a record of his search. 'The object of writing,' says Pursewarden, 'is to grow a personality which in the end enables man to transcend art',⁹⁶ and the goal of that transcendence is 'the heraldic reality of the poetic life'.⁹⁷ The terms 'heraldic' and 'heraldic universe' are first used in The Black Book, although Ruth introduces heraldry as a topic of interest in Pied Piper of Lovers. While the definition of 'the heraldic universe' is unclear in The Black Book itself, we were able to derive a definition: in the third novel, 'the heraldic universe' is depicted as the numenal world or world of forms, and volumetric rather than linear time applies. Cefalu^u gives a clearer definition of what Durrell means by the term, and a minor point in the text becomes of major importance in linking the fourth novel with the early trilogy. As we saw in comparing Pied Piper and Panic Spring, Durrell consciously uses the same characters in both, and a similar situation exists

with Panic Spring and The Black Book. Mr. Sowerby, a character from Pied Piper, appears in Miss Dombey's memories of her girlhood in Cefalu.⁹⁸ So the recurrence of the name 'Ruth' in association with the heraldic concept is probably not fortuitous, for it is Ruth Adams who provides a clearer definition of what the Ruth of Pied Pipers only hinted at. 'The heraldic universe' in the final pages of Cefalu is what Miller called the totally individual 'dream of Paradise'; it is the natural world transformed by the individual's 'myth making machine' into 'the roof of the world' which the Trumans suddenly and accidentally attain; and the path by which one reaches it is, as Fearmax knew, 'not communicable in linguistic terms'. But, using the inexact and consequently allusive tools of language, Ruth Adams describes the process as 'becoming still enough inside to be receptive to it'.⁹⁹

These major points about 'the heraldic universe' are restated in The Alexandria Quartet by Pursewarden, and exemplified primarily by Darley and Clea. 'The heraldic reality can strike from any point, above or below,' says Pursewarden: 'it is not particular.'¹⁰⁰

But how [to achieve it]? you ask
me plaintively. And truly here

you have me by the short hairs,
 for the thing operates differently
 with each one of us. I am only
 suggesting that you have not
 become desperate enough, determined
 enough. Somewhere at the heart
 of things you are still lazy of
 spirit. But then, why struggle?
 If it is to happen to you it will
 happen of its own accord. You
 may be quite right to hang about
 like this, waiting.¹⁰¹

The paradox of Clea's entry into 'the heraldic universe' is quite in keeping with the rest of the novel: a painter, she only achieves work of 'truly troubling originality and authority' after she loses her painting hand in a freak underwater accident. The rebirth motif is perhaps overstated, while the meaning of the new mechanical hand with which Amaril equips her is not entirely clear. As she tells Darley in a letter, she is quite aware that 'the Hand was responsible' for the new paintings. The attaining of 'the heraldic universe' is linked, through the symbol of the hand, with Groddeck's theory of the 'It'. Man paints, says Groddeck, only what his own inner being sees and pays attention to.

He always paints . . . what is
 the property of his It, what
 belongs to him. The painted
 landscape is not the representa-
 tion of the outside world, it is
 the landscape which his It has
 formed.¹⁰²

Clea does not exercise over the mechanical hand the willed control she once exercised over her own hand while painting. This is clearly pointed out when she tells Darley, 'I can undertake the most delicate tasks . . . as well as the coarser ones. But most important of all . . . IT can paint!',¹⁰³ Just as Pursewarden and Campion had begun to live 'heraldically' -- that is, had begun to live mythically --, so Clea has 'crossed the border and entered into the possession of [her] kingdom, thanks to the Hand'. Symbolically, Clea has shed her ego and the striving of the will, and the hand now allows her "It" to express freely what was originally held back by her conscious mind. Now, she tells Darley, 'I wait, quite serene and happy, a real human being, an artist at last.',¹⁰⁴

For Darley, the wait is longer. Earlier in Clea he had mused, 'But then is not life itself a fairy-tale which we lose the power of apprehending as we grow?',¹⁰⁵ The 'kingdom of the imagination', 'the heraldic universe', is the world restored to its 'fairy-tale' nature. Just as Clea began to paint her new 'heraldic' landscape, so for Darley the final revelation that he has entered his own 'heraldic universe' comes in a new direction which his writing takes.

Yes, one day I found myself writing down with trembling fingers the four words (four letters! four faces!) with which every storyteller since the world began has staked his slender claim to the attention of his fellow-men. Words which presage simply the old story of an artist coming of age. I wrote: 'Once upon a time'

And I felt as if the whole universe had given me a nudge!¹⁰⁶

Darley has now begun to create purely imaginatively. The struggle to collect and collate data which he underwent in order to write Justine and Balthazar he now recognises as both meaningless and fruitless. 'Blind as a mole I had been digging about in the graveyard of relative fact, piling up data, more information, and completely missing the mythopoeic reference which underlies fact.'¹⁰⁷ Darley is now being 'lived by the It', as Groddeck proposed, and his writing manifests this truth. After twenty-five years, Darley has reached the world which Walsh Clifton thought he had attained with Ruth at the end of Pied Piper of Lovers.

Should you be walking in Devon and come upon a hill shaped like a woman's head, with a perfectly shaped Jewish nose, and squint-eyes staring on to the sea, you will be near enough to me.

No one but a writer of fairy-tales could have devised it as a hut for his children, or a home for his fey wife.¹⁰⁸

The Alexandria Quartet, as we have seen, is clearly a development of the views on time, 'the heraldic universe' and the relationship of man with the natural world which began to appear in Pied Piper of Lovers. Our discussion of these themes in previous chapters indicates that the three basic concepts altered somewhat as Durrell re-investigated them in subsequent novels. The relationship with nature became more particularised through Panic Spring until, in The Black Book, we were dealing with the "feminine principle" as discussed by Groddeck and as embodied in the 'you' of the novel whom we generally identified as "the Goddess". In our discussion of The Black Book we were able to see a clear relationship between the "feminine principle" and 'the heraldic universe', and saw that relationship restated allegorically in Cefalu^u. Then, too, we saw that the rejection of linear time for what we called "volumetric time" in Panic Spring was closely linked with the eternality of 'the heraldic universe', and also with the insulae fortunatae tradition which closely parallels Durrell's new 'universe'. Finally, we saw that throughout Durrell's first four novels the movement toward realisation of self was closely linked with the view of man's relationship with nature (as the

means) and with 'the heraldic universe' (as the goal).

As in the earlier novels, the "feminine principle" as it applies in the Quartet is clearly linked to Groddeck's concept of the 'eternal female quality' which he sees as providing a structure for human existence. Man's relationship with the natural world is still embodied in "the Goddess", and the sexual act is the particularised symbol of that relationship in the tetralogy. We may now say, in retrospect, that Durrell's characterisation of women depends upon the degree to which each partakes of the nature of "the Goddess": Miss Dombey, in Cefalu^u, is essentially masculine because of her allegiance to the masculine, patristic god of Christianity, while Melissa is much more feminine because she fills the role of the sacred prostitute or "priestess" to "the Goddess" -- and Justine is purely feminine because, as Clea points out, she more than any other woman in the Quartet 'verges on the Goddess'.

And there are two other important sources for the "feminine principle" in the tetralogy. The first is Remy de Gourmont, whose Natural Philosophy of Love played such an important role in the early trilogy. When considering Durrell's own description of the Quartet as 'an investigation of modern love' and recalling

the vast sexual fare laid before the characters of that novel, we must also recall De Gourmont. The Natural Philosophy of Love presents the view that man and animal are parts of the same whole: the natural world. Further, it is 'religiose pudibundery', according to De Gourmont, which has kept man from repairing the schism, and which has laid down certain strict moral guidelines as to the "natural" and "unnatural" in sex. But, says De Gourmont,

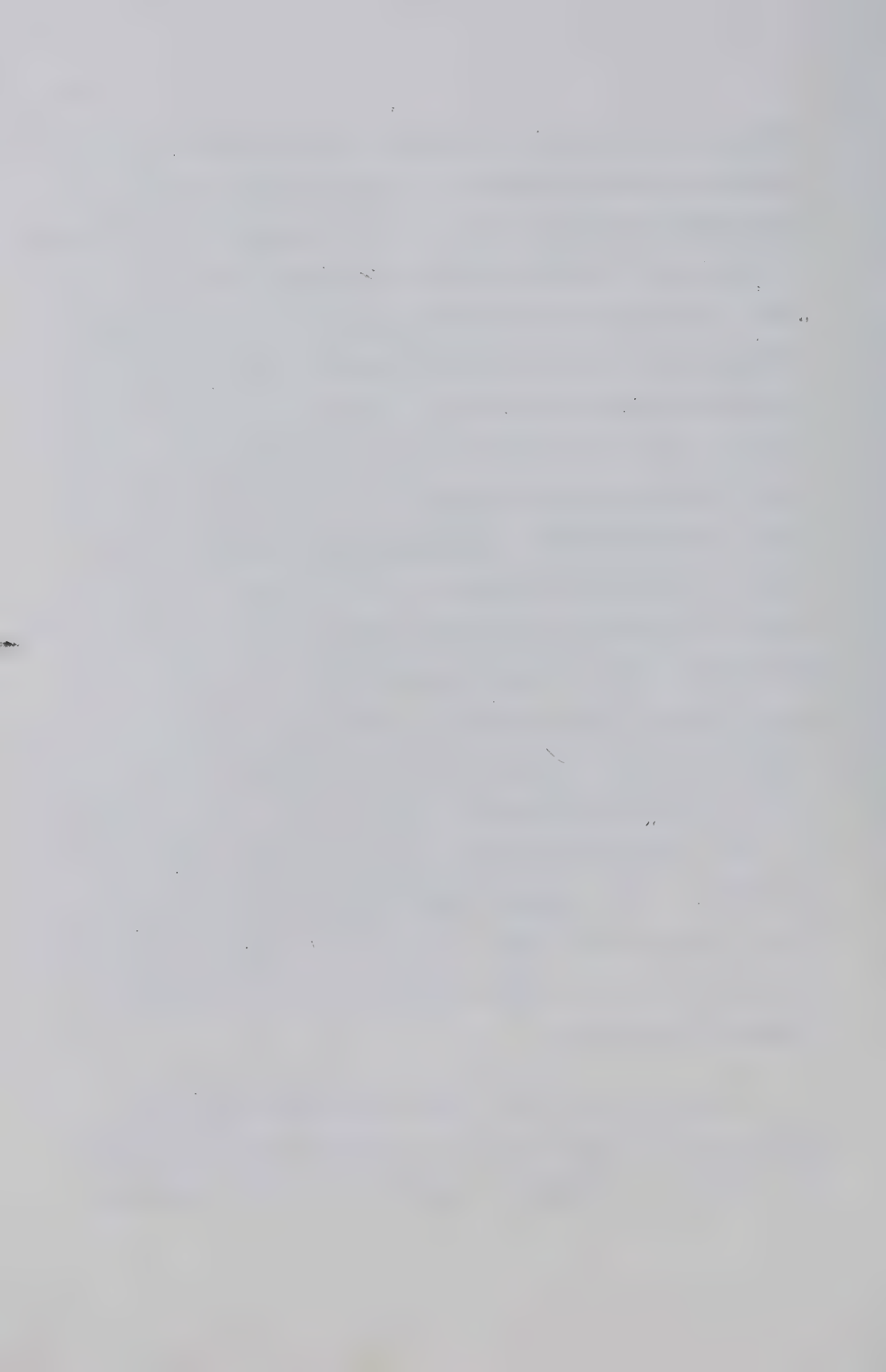
It is very difficult, especially when dealing with man, to distinguish between normal and abnormal. What is the normal; what the natural? Nature ignores this adjective, and one has dragged out of her bosom many illusions, perhaps in irony, perhaps in ignorance.¹⁰⁹

'Fecundation and birth,' Burton Rascoe points out, were what De Gourmont viewed as the means of achieving 'the elementary purpose of nature which is the "perpetual return to unity".'¹¹⁰ Thus we can clearly see that the stance taken by De Gourmont is strictly in agreement with Groddeck's view of the importance of the "feminine principle".

The second source mentioned above has a similar theme. In Balthazar, Durrell quotes from Eugène Marais' The Soul of the White Ant (1937).¹¹¹ We must assume

that he had read the whole book, although the portion which he quotes gives no hint as to Marais' basic purpose. We may consider Marais, along with De Gourmont, as a precursor of Carpenter, Lorenz and other biologists whose work provides the source for the more popular works of Robert Ardrey. Now Marais, like the others, had a predilection for viewing man as a part of, rather than apart from, the natural world, and he frequently drew parallels between the worlds of men and animals. In this way, he is very much like De Gourmont. The Soul of the White Ant is a study of the African termite, and the importance of the queen which Marais emphasizes cannot have escaped Durrell. The queen is the nervous centre of the whole termitary; she it is who gives support to the whole "animal" or 'organism' which Marais views the termitary as being. And this is the significance of Marais' book to our discussion: in a more specific way, The Soul of the White Ant supports De Gourmont and Groddeck, and Durrell could not have missed the obvious echoes in Marais of the whole "feminine principle" which he was presenting as the structuring element in existence.

There is one final point to be made about The Alexandria Quartet and the concepts we have discussed in this chapter. Groddeck's views on what the individual



sees as being what his 'It' sees are clearly related to the principle of indeterminacy and the octant theory of narrative siting through Durrell's own remark on the subject. 'The picture which each observer makes of the world,' he says, 'is in some degree subjective. Even if different observers all take their pictures at the same moment of time, and from the same point in space, their pictures will not be alike.'¹¹² This is part of the argument for setting causality aside. But we stated earlier that Durrell had done so only for the moment. There is a principle of causality underlying that of indeterminacy, but it is neither philosophic nor scientific causality. Its manifestation in The Alexandria Quartet is the "feminine principle" which we have been discussing. According to Groddeck, there is a causal relationship in the actions of the individual which has as its motive force that individual's 'It'. Similarly, there is a causal principle in the world which Groddeck calls the universal 'It', and this principle quite clearly parallels the "feminine principle" which is at work throughout Durrell. While most physicists deplore 'any attempt to deal with space-time in metaphors', Durrell remarks, some scientists have attempted to do so. Similarly, 'some eminent men of science' have not utterly

discarded causality. One of the most eminent is Sir James Jeans.

"If we still wish to think of the happenings in the world as governed by causal law we must suppose that these happenings are determined in some substratum of the world which lies beyond the world of phenomena, and also beyond our access." I quote from Sir James Jeans' Physics and Philosophy.¹¹³

Thus Durrell found scientific opinion to support that 'causal law' which he sees as underlying and informing human existence and which, throughout his work, is embodied in the "feminine principle". Primarily involving the concepts of time, 'the heraldic universe' and the relationship of man with the natural world, but centred on the "feminine principle", the development of a world-view in Durrell's novels since 1935 is rounded out in the volumes of The Alexandria Quartet.

CHAPTER SIX

"AFTERWARD"

The study of any living writer who is still producing additions to an already-established canon is in itself an example of that same principle of indeterminacy which has such a great bearing on the structure of The Alexandria Quartet. The books -- the ideas -- gather like quanta, and the study of thematic development acquires certain affinities with the plotting of the movement of particles through three-dimensional space. The plotting of that thematic development must necessarily always be retrospective, and its primary function is the discovery and elucidation of patterns in the artist's growth. A new book may therefore relate immediately to a previous stage of development -- or it may indicate a new development, a new movement toward the exploration of themes which were perhaps latent (if they appeared at all) in the earlier stages. This is the case with Tunc-Nunquam, Durrell's last published novel.

The primary consideration in the presentation and discussion of 'the English death' in the early trilogy was the relationship of the individual to the English cultural tradition. In Tunc-Nunquam, the emphasis has shifted from the individual to the concepts and bases of culture per se. Thus the "Postface" at the end of

Nunquam states that 'this novel in two parts tries to take a culture-reading merely'.¹ The 'merely' is understatement: Durrell's concern is solely with culture, and the means he employs to express his views on that subject owe much to Wyndham Lewis's The Human Age.

In the same way that he has redirected his earlier discussion of 'the English death', Durrell utilizes the basic themes of time, 'the heraldic universe' and man's relationship to nature from the previous novels in his exploration of this new theme, culture. But their presence in this latest novel cannot be construed as indicating that Tunc-Nunquam is to be grouped thematically with one or more of the earlier novels. Rather, those earlier novels and their themes have now become a point of reference and of departure for a new thematic development in his fiction. Therefore, this brief "Afterward" will attempt only to point out and comment upon the presence and use of the earlier themes as they appear in Durrell's newest effort.

Tunc-Nunquam centres on Felix Charlock, inventor extraordinaire, and his attempts to come to grips with 'the Firm', Merlin's. Merlin's -- like the Holy Roman

Church -- has an Eastern and a Western division. The first, centred in Istanbul, is headed by Jocas Pehlevi; the second, with its headquarters in London, by Julian, Jocas's brother. The insidious, all-pervasive nature of 'the Firm' begins to trouble Charlock, and he comes to think of Merlin's as an essentially evil force which is undermining the world society of the twentieth century. In one sense, then, Felix is a modern 'Charlock' Holmes in pursuit of the corporate Professor Moriarty, Julian Pehlevi. Tunc chronicles the chase, and ends with the death of Charlock. Along the way, however, the "clues" which Felix follows out in his attempt to meet Julian face to face lead him into various cultural by-ways, and these side-trips form the basis of Nunquam. In the second part of the novel, Charlock -- like Conan Doyle's hero -- returns from the dead "by popular (i.e., authorial) demand" and encounters Julian, whom he finds a most sympathetic figure. Nunquam is, in fact, the weightier half of the novel, for it involves the major theoretical reflections on the nature of "culture" in the twentieth century. In short, Nunquam takes a negative view of the 'mob-culture' of the century as it is embodied in its most persistent pandar, the cinema house, and its tinsel

goddesses, the movie stars. But, in the end, 'the Firm' remains, with Felix Charlock as the new head who, it is suggested, will make the old corporate body into a force for good.

From the viewpoint of 'the heraldic universe' as we have seen it develop in terms of the artist's relationship to his art from The Black Book through The Alexandria Quartet, Tunc-Nunquam is a logical development from the final lines of Clea. There, Darley wrote,

But it was to be a little while yet
before the clouds parted before me
to reveal the secret landscape of
which [Clea] was writing

Then one day I wrote: 'Once upon
a time'

And I felt as if the whole universe
had given me a nudge!²

Characters and action in the latest novel have moved into the numenal world of 'the heraldic universe' which the 'Once upon a time' of Clea suggests. The "otherworldliness" of Mavrodaphne in Panic Spring; the 'roof of the world' in Cefalû which bears so strong a resemblance to the home of Cupid and Psyche in Pater's Marius The Epicurean; the mauve-tinted world of Alexandria in which Justine walks as the personification of Aphrodite -- these

and other "worlds" which Durrell has created are joined now by Istanbul and the English counties. The names of the characters, too, are those of the fairy-tale, for Tunc-Nunquam is perhaps more an exemplum than a novel. Felix, Benedicta, Caradoc -- the characters inhabit the "real" world of the twentieth century, and yet at the same time live beyond that world as illustrations of the forces at work in it. Their actions, and those of 'the Firm', are more a part of the 'portentous pattern' which informs the existence of mankind in the atomic age than they are of the quotidian reality of the phenomenal world. The discussion of that 'portentous pattern' in Tunc-Nunquam, although it varies in content from the discussions in the previous novels, is still based on the themes of time, 'the heraldic universe' and man's relationship to the natural world.

Time in Tunc-Nunquam is tied directly to memory. From this central point, strands of thought lead out into the areas of causality and death -- areas which, to a greater or lesser extent, were explored in the earlier works. Even the graffiti which Felix Charlock leaves behind on washroom walls deal with the idea.

Some hours earlier, a bag-fox drunk on aniseed, I had written in my careful

cursive, "I think the control of human memory is essential for any kind of future advance of the species. The refining of false time is the issue."³

Justine, we may recall, was solely the product of Darley's memories of individuals and events in pre-war Alexandria, and had as its basis an assumed causal relationship between events which, with the arrival of Balthazar's 'Great Interlinear', was utterly disproved. The 'false time' to which Charlock refers is 'the geometrical insanity' of linear or chronological time which was discarded in The Black Book and which implies the same kind of causality. As Charlock points out to Nash, the psychoanalyst of Tunc-Nunquam, "Causality is an attempt to mesmerise the world into some sort of significance. We cannot bear its indifference."⁴ 'False time', then, must be 'refined' in order to give mankind a sense of continuity or causality which will allow him to exist within the framework of a universe which operates on the principle of indeterminacy.

Similarly, the nature of death is altered when time is tied to memory rather than to the process of decay in the human body. 'Death is a matter of complete irrelevance so long as the memory umbilicus holds.'⁵ This principle is directly related to the concepts put

forward in The Tibetan Book of the Dead, in which the principle of consciousness and its mnemonic component are carried forward from one corporal unit to another and dying becomes merely a state of 'becoming' in the Platonic sense, rather than a terminal stage. The 'complete irrelevance' of death is manifested in Iolanthe II, the android in whose electronic brain is housed a mnemonic system which perfectly reproduces that of the original Iolanthe. In fact, the "reality" of Iolanthe is carried over from Tunc to Nunquam: the android is merely another corporal unit in which the memory data of Iolanthe -- and by extension her personality -- have been housed, and the continuation of her temporal existence is assumed by the "reincarnated" Iolanthe.

Finally, the concept of time is tied to the idea of individual human choice, specifically through the 'Aut Tunc Aut Nunquam' epigraph which prefaces Tunc. "But when the crash came," Caradoc tells Charlock and Benedicta, "I realised that I had to try [to get free of the firm]. But aut Tunc aut Nunquam -- it was then or never!"⁶ Durrell clarifies his intent in the "Postface" to the novel.

Nor do the epigraphs present any mystery. It's always now or never -- since we are human and enjoy the fatality of choice.⁷

The nature of choice is defined in the novel in terms of the relationship of individuals to 'the Firm', in much the same way as it is defined in terms of a similar relationship to nature in the earlier novels. Caradoc's choice is also taken by Felix Charlock -- indeed, Tunc begins and ends with Charlock's death. But both of these quite sudden demises are related to the "death" of 'Lawrence Lucifer' in The Black Book. None of the three actually "die"; they all simply change their relationship to the past circumstances of their lives. Koepgen, the monk whose "obiter dicta" in Tunc-Nunquam are a development from those of Pursewarden in The Alexandria Quartet, has met an old leper who claims to be Merlin, the founder of 'the Firm', and who has sent Charlock two messages.

"He said, 'The firm only exists to be escaped from. Tell Charlock.' What do you make of that? Then on another occasion he said: 'There are two kinds of death open to the living. Tell Charlock.'"⁸

The first kind of death is terminal; the second, a removal into the 'heraldic reality' of one's own personal myth which we have seen elsewhere in Cefalu[^] and in The Alexandria

Quartet.

We have seen the relationship of Tunc-Nunquam to the 'secret landscape' of 'the heraldic universe' which Darley finally achieves in his writing at the end of Clea. But the second earlier application of the term -- its application to the personal myth created by the individual -- also appears as a factor in Durrell's latest novel. 'What we all lacked, it seemed to me,' says Charlock, '-- and here I was mentally copying Koepgen with his ex cathedra judgements -- was the mythological extension of human personality.'⁹ Caradoc achieves that 'mythological extension' when, after his airplane crashes off the coast of Australia, he disappears and assumes a totally other life-style under the name "Robinson". This episode, which owes more to Gauguin's Journal than it does to Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, is reported by Pulley, Caradoc's assistant, who accidentally came upon "Robinson" in the Celebes.

"And one of the things I saw in that few seconds I didn't take in until afterwards, when I was on the run. For example that he had two small kids at his breasts, he was giving them suck, old man. I could even see some of the milk trickling

down among the hairs on his breast,
white as coconut-milk. It seemed to
me that it was Caradoc all right."¹⁰

In Nunquam, Caradoc's account of his "death" tallies with Pulley's description of Robinson-Caradoc. In his exaggerated change from architect to Celebes patriarch, Caradoc exemplifies the second kind of "death" to which Merlin refers in his message to Charlock.

We saw, in our discussion of Cefalû, that there is a quite definite link between the ability of the individual to achieve his own 'heraldic universe' and his realisation of his true relationship to the natural world. The following remarks by Vibart almost directly echo the remarks of Campion to Fearmax in that fourth novel.

"To hell with death" Vibart said robustly, as if he had read my mind. "It is merely a provisional solution for people who won't take the full psychic charge."

"What on earth's that?"

"To live forever, of course. Immortality is built-in my dear boy; it's like a button nobody dares to touch because the label has come off it and nobody knows what might happen if one dared to press it. The button of the unknown."¹¹

Many of the discoveries about the natural world made by

characters in the earlier novels appear in Tunc-Nunquam. Some -- such as coitus as an act of worship, or the prostitute as "priestess" -- are carried forward virtually unchanged. Others -- such as the importance and the nature of 'the Goddess' -- are reshaped to fit the circumstances of the new theme. Some -- such as the statement in The Black Book that 'the verb "to fuck" is synonymous with the verb "to be"' -- are simply alluded to in passing, so that in Tunc we have a reference to the period of 'full moon in Polis, when cats conjugate the verb "to be".'¹² Others appear directly, and in some detail.

The idea of the brothel as shrine and the prostitute as "priestess" which Darley explores in The Alexandria Quartet is put forward once again by Caradoc during a visit to 'The Nube', a house of good repute in Athens.

"The Nube is the perfect place for self-examination, better than a church. Why not, after all? The nearest vicarious approach to death is by the orgasm which produces its temporary simulacrum." The Cham warmed to the pulpit, his tone now tinged distinctly with Welsh tabernacle. "That is why it has been surrounded with prayer, poetry, propitiation, tabu. The Greeks saw a clear relationship and in their wisdom compounded temple and brothel."¹³

Caradoc later extends his discussion when, lauding the worth of Fatma, one of Mrs. Henniker's "girls", he says, "She may not be a goddess to everyone, though her lineaments reveal an ancient heritage."¹⁴ This is completely in keeping with the view presented in the Quartet, and leads logically into the view of Iolanthe, who once worked at 'The Nube', as the twentieth century embodiment of 'the Goddess' who personifies the forces of nature which underlie existence.

Durrell concentrates his exploration of culture in the figure of Iolanthe and her android "reincarnation", Iolanthe II. The key to this discussion lies in Caradoc's speech on the Acropolis in Tunc. Here he expands upon a theory which links the feminine principle presented in the earlier novels with the basic principles of architectural siting and, in the following passage, with the Zeitgeist of the twentieth century, 'Mobego'.

"Astrology also had a say in the founding of temples and towns. Spika was the marking star for the ancients -- people far earlier than the sophisticates who built this sanctuary. In those times it was accurately done by the responsible agent, the king, with the aid of two pegs joined by a cord, and a golden mallet. The

priestess having driven one peg into the ground at a previously consecrated spot, the king then directed his gaze to the constellation of the Bull's Foreleg. Having aligned the cord to the hoof thereof and to Spika, as seen through the visor of the strange head-dress of the priestess, he drove home the second peg to mark the axis of the temple to be. Boom!

"Mobego, the god of today, does not require any such efforts on our part."¹⁵

This juxtaposition of past and present points to the basic conflict which Durrell finds in his 'culture-reading': the reference to basic universal structuring principles in the siting of ancient towns -- the fundamental social unit which Durrell characterises as 'Polis' -- has been utterly discarded under the influence of 'Mobego'. And 'the Firm' is both the reflection and the agent of 'Mobego'.

The ubiquitous presence of 'the Firm' in all aspects of human life, from the manufacture of armaments to the manufacture of a sperm-thickening agent, makes Merlin's "a name to conjure with" for Felix Charlock. The intentional irony, if not the pun, is Durrell's. The agent of 'Mobego' has been given the name of King Arthur's chief Druid to point up the ways in which the new structuring forces of twentieth century society are a perversion of the old natural forces. The irony is

compounded in Tunc when, after attending the first test of a new gun-sight on Salisbury Plain, Charlock becomes lost in a dense fog which clears, almost miraculously, when he is within yards of Stonehenge. Here, 'Mobego' and the past, weaponry and pre-Christian religion, are juxtaposed, and the effect intentionally favours the ancient Druid temple. In the view of 'the Firm' itself, there is nothing odd in this juxtaposition, for the principles upon which Merlin's works are simply a continuation and adaptation of the old principles which Caradoc recalls on the Acropolis and which we have seen at work in the earlier novels. Just as De Gourmont suggests that the value judgements implicit in the terms "natural" and "unnatural" have no real basis in the world of nature, so 'the Firm' exists quite outside of the considerations of "good" and "evil". For Julian Pehlevi, then, Merlin's is just as "natural" as the concepts behind the ancient siting of temples and towns.

"What I'm trying to say is that the firm isn't just an extension of moral qualities, a product of a wicked human will, of a greedy mercantile spirit.

I'm not saying that it's an easy thing or a gay thing; but it's a fact of nature, man's nature."16

This view is made more specific in Nunquam when Julian ties 'the Firm' to the ancient religious rituals which, when they appeared in the novels from The Black Book to The Alexandria Quartet, were seen to have their source in the sexual act. "My dear [Charlock], in this, our new Middle Ages, investment has become the motor response of all religion No, for us money is sperm, and the investment of it the ritual of propitiation."¹⁷ This is, of course, a perversion of Balthazar's remark in the Quartet that 'one kneels in church because one kneels to enter a woman'. 'Mobego', the guiding spirit of the twentieth century, has obliterated if not utterly destroyed the reflections of the natural world, and its own reflections have assumed the guise of those same natural principles.

Thus it is that the female embodiment of the new "natural" forces of the twentieth century is the android, Iolanthe II, which Julian insists will define a new aesthetic for the age and provide the key to freedom for 'the Firm'.¹⁸ The first Iolanthe -- the prostitute who, as Charlock's mistress, is an expanded version of Darley's Melissa -- was, before she became a motion picture star, a true "priestess" and an extension of 'the Goddess'. But, after her rise to stardom in what Durrell repeatedly

calls the 'mock-art' of the cinema, she becomes an extension and a purveyor of the values of 'Mobego'. Durrell's discussion of the negative influence of the cinema follows directly from a similar discussion in The Black Book.

Julian tells Charlock that "The screen itself is a sterile thing in essence -- bed-sheet or winding-sheet, or both; but lightly dusted over with alchemical silver the better to capture the projected image so dear to the collective unconscious -- the youthful mother image with its incestuous emphasis",¹⁹ which is on view in 'the shrine of the love goddess . . . , [those] suburban cinemas in Finchley and Willesden where the sacred mask was being exhibited.'²⁰ Charlock accuses Iolanthe of supplying "a surrogate mob-culture with vulgarised versions of classics watered down by pissy-witted cinéastes" and not true art, but it is the Countess Hippolyta who provides the most concise statement of the significance of the cinema to the twentieth century. It is well worth quoting that statement at length here, not only because of its significance to the novel, but because it is a clear theoretical position on what was only hinted at in The Black Book thirty years earlier.

"If it were an art-form [Iolanthe]
would be truly great. Thank God it

isn't. I should be even more angry."

"How can we know?"

"Why it's aimed at the mob."

Then later over repulsive tea and buttered toast in some small cafe she explained in more detail. "You see, the majority must always be denied the higher pleasures like art etc. which in our age it feels entitled to. It's not a matter of privilege, my dear. Just as literacy doesn't confer the ability to really read -- so biologically the many are unfitted for the rarest pleasures which are travestied by Iolanthe; love-making, art, theology, science -- they each contain whole lives, silver lives, encapsulated in a form. They exist for the maker and his few subjects. She exists for everyone. When we speak of the destruction of an ethos or a civilisation we are describing the effect on it of the mob-discovery of it. The mob wants it, but it must be made palatable. Naturally the efficacy becomes diluted. There you have Iolanthe."²²

The intent is obvious: not only has the efficacy of the work of art been diluted in order that the mob may ingest it, but the efficacy of 'the Goddess' has been similarly diluted and then presented in the form of Iolanthe. For Vibart, the cinema is "the best way of trivialising reality";²³ for Felix Charlock 'the cinema is the No play of the Yes-Man'.²⁴ In The Black Book, the motion picture is presented as a travesty on and a distortion of reality, and in Tunc-Nunquam it is further seen as

symptomatic of the destruction of civilisation.

How fitting, then, that the 'shallow, trashy' representative of 'the Goddess' should be "reincarnated" in the form of an android. Iolanthe II is the mechanised parallel of 'the sterile paragon' of the new age, Mickey Mouse, as he appears in The Black Book. But earlier, in Pied Piper of Lovers, Durrell had said, '"We are, are we not, the one generation with clockwork guts? Robot-minded hyper-super-steel and reinforced concrete."' ²⁵ So the android is also the paragon of the new man, living in an immortality conferred upon her by the scientists and technicians of 'the Firm' which is more "real" than the immortality of the face of the first Iolanthe as it appears on the cinema screen. Iolanthe II is the perfect mate and the perfect anima for the castrated Julian Pehlevi, the head and the symbol of the organisation which controls so much of the life of this century.

Finally, we come to the central question of Tunc-Nunquam, a question first put by Clea in The Alexandria Quartet. Musing on the awesome power of the new bombers being used throughout Europe and the Middle East during the Second World War, she says,

"I've always believed that our inventions mirror our secret wishes, and we wish for the end of the city-man, don't we? All of us?"²⁶

Durrell explores this question, by implication, throughout Tunc-Nunquam. Anthony Burgess accuses him of being merely silly and affected in referring to Istanbul as 'Polis' throughout the novel, but this is by no means the case, for 'polis' means "city" and it is Durrell's intention that Istanbul represent all cities. Polis and 'the Firm' are inextricably linked on both the concrete and the abstract planes. Merlin's was founded in this Levantine port, but the city has become a reflection of 'the Firm'. In essence, Durrell is here suggesting that the mechanism upon which the modern societal unit is based has suffered a marked change from the early system which Caradoc describes to that which Julian ascribes to "human nature" in the twentieth century. "'Our inventions mirror our secret wishes,'" Clea suggests, and Iolanthe II mirrors the desire of Julian and 'the Firm' to ultimately control humanity and reduce all creativity to the same sterile base. Merlin's, the cinema and Iolanthe II form a composite symbol of the modern age which differs from the pulping-machine to which 'Lawrence Lucifer' sees everything being subjected in The Black Book only in that it is more

sophisticated and more fully-developed. Two lines of poetry which appear in Tunc make the point succinctly and clearly.

"Hail, O Consumer's Age" the voices
boomed,
But which consumer is, and which
consumed?²⁷

The 'culture-reading' which Durrell takes in Tunc-Nunquam is particularly bleak, but Nunquam does suggest a hopeful solution. On the deaths of Julian and Jocas Pehlevi, Felix Charlock assumes control of Merlin's and -- like Durrell's own Faustus -- plans to destroy the source of 'the Firm's' power, its record of accounts. By so doing, he hopes to cut the bonds which tie twentieth century man to this mechanist, distorted system which has replaced the forces of nature as the structuring element underlying existence. His 'irreverent prayer' at the end of Nunquam indicates the anti-urban direction he hopes the reaction to financial freedom will take in the majority of cases.

"O Lord, deliver us from the primacy of the Mobego whose genetic silhouette is the Firm, and its closed system. Suffer us to wander like rational men in the fair psyche-haunted fields of Epicurus, inhabiting our own fair bodies. If you can't do this, Lord, you should say so clearly and resign."²⁸

Based on the thematic development in the novels which precede Tunc-Nunquam, we might venture to guess that Durrell intends Charlock's prayer to a pre-mechanist god to have the desired effect. But this would only be guessing. Following the principle of indeterminacy, we can do no more than what has been done in this "Afterward". We must now wait for Durrell himself to tell us whether his new novel has been 'a pre-nativity or a post-mortem'.

FOOTNOTES

FOOTNOTES

"Introduction".

¹ Lawrence Durrell, Balthazar (London) Faber (1961), p. 7.

² Anthony Burgess, "Durrell and the Homunculi", in Saturday Review, 21 March 1970, p. 41.

³ John Weigel, Lawrence Durrell (N.Y.) Dutton (1966), esp. p. 40.

⁴ cf. African Genesis, The Territorial Imperative.

⁵ "Durrell By Himself". A 'Telescope' presentation of 7 November 1968. From a transcription of a tape-recording made by the writer.

⁶ Burgess, p. 41.

"Chapter One"

¹ The Booster, II, #7 (September 1937), 49.

² The Booster, II, #8 (October 1937), 19 - 23.

³ W. Y. Evans-Wentz, The Tibetan Book Of The Dead, or The After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane, according to Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering (London) Oxford University Press (1968) [1927], p. xvi.

⁴ Lawrence Durrell, The Black Book (N.Y.) Pocket Books, Inc. (1962), p. xiii.

⁵ George Wickes, ed., Lawrence Durrell and Henry Miller: A Private Correspondence (London) Faber (1963), p. 60.

⁶ Lawrence Durrell, Pied Piper Of Lovers (London) Cassell (1935), p. 3. These quotations are only possible through the kindness of the publishers, who very thoughtfully agreed to photocopy the only copy of the novel in their archives.

⁷ Pied Piper, p. 35.

8 "Cities, Plains and People", in Lawrence Durrell, Collected Poems (London) Faber (1960), p. 199, ll. 8 - 10.

9 Pied Piper, pp. 54 - 55.

10 Pied Piper, p. 56.

11 Pied Piper, pp. 67 - 68.

12 Pied Piper, p. 72.

13 Pied Piper, p. 73.

14 Quoted by Burton Rascoe in his "Introduction" to Remy de Gourmont, The Natural Philosophy of Love, trans. Ezra Pound (N.Y.) Collier Books (1961) [1932], p. xii.

15 Pied Piper, pp. 77 - 78.

16 Pied Piper, p. 76.

17 "Cities, Plains and People", p. 200, ll. 35 - 37.

18 Pied Piper, p. 78.

19 Pied Piper, p. 80.

20 Pied Piper, p. 83.

21 Pied Piper, p. 84.

22 Pied Piper, p. 86.

23 Pied Piper, pp. 54 - 55.

24 Pied Piper, p. 88.

25 Pied Piper, pp. 92 - 93.

26 "Cities, Plains and People", p. 201, ll. 51 - 52.

27 "Durrell By Himself".

28 Pied Piper, p. 97.

29 Pied Piper, pp. 111 - 112.

- 30 Pied Piper, p. 371.
- 31 Pied Piper, p. 112.
- 32 De Gourmont, The Natural Philosophy of Love,
pp. 25 - 26.
- 33 Pied Piper, pp. 67 - 68.
- 34 Pied Piper, p. 147.
- 35 Pied Piper, p. 153.
- 36 Pied Piper, pp. 150 - 153.
- 37 Pied Piper, pp. 167 - 168.
- 38 Pied Piper, p. 168.
- 39 Pied Piper, p. 161.
- 40 Pied Piper, p. 165.
- 41 Pied Piper, pp. 171 - 172.
- 42 Pied Piper, p. 172.
- 43 Pied Piper, p. 173.
- 44 Pied Piper, pp. 178 - 180.
- 45 Pied Piper, p. 179.
- 46 Pied Piper, p. 180.
- 47 De Gourmont, pp. 63 - 64.
- 48 Pied Piper, p. 194 and p. 190.
- 49 Pied Piper, p. 165.
- 50 Pied Piper, p. 196.
- 51 Pied Piper, p. 199.
- 52 Pied Piper, pp. 215 - 216.

- 53 Pied Piper, p. 217.
- 54 Pied Piper, p. 177.
- 55 De Gourmont, p. 140.
- 56 De Gourmont, pp. 147 - 148.
- 57 Pied Piper, pp. 67 - 68.
- 58 "Cities, Plains and People", p. 204, ll. 125 -
127.
- 59 René Descartes, Objections and Replies, Postulate
II, trans. E. S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross, in Great Books
of the Western World, XXXI, 131.
- 60 Pied Piper, p. 216.
- 61 Pied Piper, p. 221.
- 62 Pied Piper, p. 217.
- 63 Pied Piper, pp. 225 - 226.
- 64 Pied Piper, p. 228.
- 65 Pied Piper, p. 231.
- 66 The Black Book, p. 149.
- 67 The Black Book, p. 13.
- 68 Pied Piper, p. 247; italics mine.
- 69 Pied Piper, pp. 231 - 232.
- 70 Pied Piper, p. 232.
- 71 Pied Piper, p. 232.
- 72 Pied Piper, pp. 234 - 239.
- 73 Pied Piper, pp. 233 - 234.
- 74 Pied Piper, p. 241.

- 75 Pied Piper, p. 240.
- 76 Pied Piper, esp. pp. 267 - 268.
- 77 Pied Piper, p. 269.
- 78 Pied Piper, p. 276.
- 79 Pied Piper, p. 281.
- 80 Pied Piper, pp. 294 - 295.
- 81 Pied Piper, p. 298.
- 82 [Sir] Arthur Quiller-Couch, The Oxford Book of English Verse, 1250 - 1900 (N.Y.) Blue Ribbon Books (n.d.) [1900?], pp. 28 - 32. The portions quoted by Durrell are: Stanza 5, ll. 37 - 40; Stanza 6, in toto; Stanza 7, ll. 53 - 56, and Stanza 8, ll. 57 - 58.
- 83 Pied Piper, pp. 297 - 298.
- 84 Later published as The Dark Labyrinth.
- 85 Pied Piper, p. 311.
- 86 Pied Piper, esp. pp. 310 - 315.
- 87 Pied Piper, p. 313.
- 88 Pied Piper, p. 314.
- 89 Pied Piper, pp. 317 - 329.
- 90 Pied Piper, p. 316.
- 91 Pied Piper, p. 319.
- 92 Pied Piper, p. 320.
- 93 Pied Piper, p. 320.
- 94 Pied Piper, p. 320.
- 95 Pied Piper, p. 325.
- 96 Pied Piper, p. 327.

- 97 De Gourmont, p. 129; italics mine.
- 98 Pied Piper, p. 329.
- 99 Pied Piper. pp. 331 - 332.
- 100 Pied Piper, p. 344.
- 101 Pied Piper, pp. 344 - 345.
- 102 Pied Piper, p. 346.
- 103 Pied Piper, p. 346.
- 104 Pied Piper, p. 347.
- 105 Pied Piper, p. 232.
- 106 Pied Piper, p. 347.
- 107 Pied Piper, p. 347.
- 108 Pied Piper, p. 350.
- 109 Pied Piper, p. 353.
- 110 Pied Piper, pp. 354 - 356.
- 111 Pied Piper, p. 4.
- 112 Pied Piper, p. 361.
- 113 Pied Piper, p. 362.
- 114 Pied Piper, p. 368.
- 115 Pied Piper, p. 369.
- 116 Pied Piper, p. 371.
- 117 Pied Piper, p. 371.
- 118 Pied Piper, p. 371.
- 119 Pied Piper, p. 372.
- 120 "Cities, Plains and People", p. 199, ll. 8 - 10.

121 Evans-Wentz, p. xvi.

122 Pied Piper, p. 373.

123 In the foregoing commentary on Pied Piper of Lovers, nothing has been said about critical opinion of the book. This is because such opinion is scarce, and because what there is of it very neatly skirts the issues which arise from a reading of the novel. John Weigel, in his book on Durrell, refers to the novel as 'an ingenuous work' and accedes to George Wickes's description of it as 'an account of bohemian life in Bloomsbury', even though he admits in a footnote that

I have just seen two copies of this rare work -- one in the British Museum and one kindly lent to me by the British publisher, Cassell (p. 153).

The original edition of Weigel's book was published by Twayne in 1965, and no changes were made in the Dutton edition of 1966. But in 1968, an article by Weigel, entitled "Lawrence Durrell's First Novel", appeared in Twentieth Century Literature (July, 1968, pp. 75 - 83). Between 1965 and 1968, then, Weigel had read the novel -- but his conclusions are the same! His reason for the article is puerile. 'This analysis has been confined to the first novel,' he says, 'because it has never before been "scrutinized".' Having completed his 'scrutiny', he then refers to a comment which Durrell made in an interview with Kenneth Young (Encounter, XIII [December, 1959], 67) 'over twenty years' after Pied Piper was published, in order to support the conclusions which he reached in his earlier volume.

One wonders where the proliferated description and opinion of the novel originated, and one suspects that both came from Durrell. This writer recently came across a letter from Lawrence Clarke Powell to Brooke Whiting, included with an offprint of an article on Durrell by Herbert Howarth, which indicates that Powell had managed to secure a copy of Pied Piper for the Durrell Collection at The University of California (Los Angeles). Howarth's article appeared in April, 1963, and George Wickes's edition of the Durrell-Miller letters appeared in England in the same year. In his introduction

to the letters, Wickes indicates that his sources have been two: Lawrence Clark Powell and the UCLA Miller Archives, and the collection of Durrelliana amassed by Durrell's very good friend, Alan Gradon Thomas -- the former for the letters from Durrell to Miller, the latter for those from Miller to Durrell. Considering the approximate date of the letter from Powell to Whiting cited above, Wickes could not have read Pied Piper during his research at UCLA, which was probably concluded in 1962, for the volume was not in the Durrell Collection at that point. Lawrence Durrell: A Checklist, published on the occasion of Lawrence Clark Powell donating his collection of Durrelliana to UCLA in 1961, corroborates the fact that the novel was not in the UCLA library in that year. Both Powell and Thomas, as Durrell collectors and aficionados, would have read the novel and, from the foregoing commentary, could not have described it as 'an account of bohemian life in Bloomsbury', which it is certainly not. Powell was Head Librarian at UCLA, and Thomas is an antiquarian book dealer in London. It is hard to imagine either of them committing such a gross error in the description of a book. Therefore, judging from Durrell's successful attempts to pass over Pied Piper of Lovers in his interview with Kenneth Young, we can only assume that Durrell himself has perpetrated both the opinion and the description.

The only other possible reason for the opinion of the novel which Weigel and, later, G. S. Fraser, present, is a "conspiracy of silence" regarding the book. There is a footnote from Durrell himself in Alan G. Thomas's "Recollections Of A Durrell Collector", which is appended to G. S. Fraser's Lawrence Durrell: A Study (Faber, 1968). Durrell read Thomas's "Recollections" before they went to press and, of the memory of his own reply to a review of Pied Piper, Durrell said,

In justice add that I wrote the following epigraph in many copies:

'There was a young fellow called Lawrence
From whose pen the tripe trickled in torrents;
Though this carries a greeting
He can't help repeating
He regards the whole thing with abhorrence'
 (pp. 192 - 193).

G. S. Fraser has been a friend of Durrell since 'Cairo in

the early 1940s'. Alan G. Thomas has been a friend since 1934. Wickes at least corresponded with, if he did not actually meet, Thomas. Weigel took his opinion of the book from Wickes. The conclusion is obvious.

124 Pied Piper, p. 221.

125 Rascoe, "Introduction" to De Gourmont, p. xi.

126 Pied Piper, p. 76.

127 De Gourmont, p. 20.

128 Pied Piper, pp. 369 - 370.

129 De Gourmont, p. 19.

130 Pied Piper, pp. 225 - 226.

131 It is unlikely that Durrell had read Lao Tzu when he wrote Pied Piper of Lovers, although Taoism does deal with union with 'The One' and becomes important later. In fact, the earliest reference to Lao Tzu (or 'Lao-tse') in the Durrell-Miller letters is in a reply from Miller to Durrell, dated Summer, 1936, in which Miller mentions Durrell's reference to the Chinese writings (Wickes, p. 17). Durrell's voracious reading, coupled with the enthusiastic underlining of Clifton and the heated arguments he had with Turnbull, indicate that Durrell had recently read Lao Tzu when he wrote to Miller, presumably early in 1936.

132 G. S. Fraser, Lawrence Durrell: A Study (London) Faber (1968), p. 9.

133 Fraser, p. 9.

134 Pied Piper, p. 373.

135 Wyndham Lewis, Time and Western Man (Boston) Beacon Press (1957) [1927], p. 382.

136 Lewis, Time and Western Man, cf. esp. p. 383.

137 Pied Piper, p. 373.

138 Lewis, Time and Western Man, p. 383; italics mine.

- 139 Wyndham Lewis, "The Value of the Doctrine behind Subjective Art", in The Monthly Criterion, VI: 1 (July 1927), 4.
- 140 Pied Piper, p. 373.
- 141 Wickes, p. 30.
- 142 Wyndham Lewis, One-Way Song (London) Faber (1933), p. 58.
- 143 Pied Piper, p. 294.
- 144 Fraser, esp. pp. 9 - 21.

"Chapter Two"

- 1 Pied Piper, p. 369.
- 2 Charles Norden [pseud. Durrell], Panic Spring (London) Faber (1937), p. 28.
- 3 For a definition of "romance", see M. H. Abrams, A Glossary Of Literary Terms, rev. ed. (N.Y.) Holt, Rinehart and Winston (1957) [1941], p. 58.
- 4 By this the writer does not intend "existential" in the philosophical sense. He means only to define the second type of time as being dependent on existence, rather than on an abstract system.
- 5 Lord Dunsany, The King Of Elfland's Daughter, intro. Lin Carter (N.Y.) Ballantine Books (1969) [1924], p. 40.
- 6 See Immanuel Velikovsky's interesting comments regarding the measurement of time, which show that, while the results of such measurement may vary, that which is measured does not. Worlds In Collision (N.Y.) Dell (1965) [1952], esp. pp. 317 - 324.
- 7 S. B. Liljegren, Essays and Studies on English Language and Literature, XXIII: Studies on the Origin and Early Tradition of English Utopian Fiction (Uppsala) English Institute, Upsala University (1961), 17 - 18; italics mine.

8 Text, p. 39. References to the text of the thesis have been made in order to allow the reader to refer to material from the first two novels which would otherwise be unavailable due to their rarity.

9 Panic Spring, p. 39.

10 A Lexicon, Abridged from Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon (London) Oxford University Press (1963), p. 427.

11 Pied Piper, p. 371; italics mine.

12 Panic Spring, p. 106; italics mine.

13 Panic Spring, p. 123.

14 Panic Spring, p. 124.

15 Stephen Spender, World Within World: the autobiography of (London) Readers Union Ltd (1953), p. 117.

16 Panic Spring, p. 9.

17 Wickes, p. 11.

18 Wickes, p. 11.

19 Wickes, p. 32.

20 Wickes, pp. 32 - 33.

21 Wickes, p. 19.

22 Text, p. 20.

23 Text, pp. 37 - 38.

24 Lewis, Time and Western Man, p. 164.

25 Dagobert D. Runes and Harry G. Schrickel, eds., Encyclopedia of the Arts (N.Y.) Philosophical Library (1946), p. 428.

26 Wickes, p. 23.

27 Text, pp. 42 - 43.

- 28 Wickes, p. 53.
- 29 Lewis, Time and Western Man, p. 382.
- 30 Lawrence Durrell and The Quest for Artistic Consciousness. University of British Columbia Master's Thesis, 1965.
- 31 Panic Spring, p. 91.
- 32 Vergilius Ferm, ed., An Encyclopedia of Religion (N.Y.) Philosophical Library (1945), pp. 631 - 632.
- 33 Panic Spring, pp. 87 - 88.
- 34 Panic Spring, p. 91.
- 35 From "Lawrence Durrell: an author in his setting", transcription of an April 1968 interview with Roy Perrott. UCLA Durrell Collection, #637, Box 4: 'Ephemera'.
- 36 William Haley, ed., Encyclopaedia Britannica, XVIII (Chicago) Encyclopaedia Britannica (1969), 963 - 964.
- 37 Alan G. Thomas, ed., Lawrence Durrell, Spirit of Place: Letters and Essays on Travel (London) Faber (1969).
- 38 Weigel, p. 42.
- 39 Wickes, p. 24.
- 40 Alan G. Thomas, in a letter dated 25 January 1969.
- 41 Alan G. Thomas, letter of 25 January 1969.
- 42 Panic Spring, p. 88.
- 43 Panic Spring, p. 92.
- 44 Panic Spring, p. 93; italics mine.
- 45 Text, p. 20.
- 46 Text, pp. 21 - 22.

- 47 Panic Spring, p. 260.
- 48 Panic Spring, p. 263.
- 49 Wickes, p. 23.
- 50 Panic Spring, p. 240.
- 51 "Cities, Plains and People", p. 203, ll. 111 -
118.
- 52 J. Bronowski, Science and Human Values (G.B.)
Penguin (1964), p. 44.
- 53 "Cities, Plains and People", p. 204, ll. 127
and 126.
- 54 Panic Spring, esp. pp. 268 - 269.
- 55 Panic Spring, p. 269.
- 56 For example, p. 127.
- 57 Panic Spring, pp. 287 - 289.
- 58 Panic Spring, p. 289; italics mine.
- 59 Lawrence Durrell, "Studies in Genius, VIII --
Henry Miller", in Horizon, XX (July 1949), 46 - 47.
- 60 Panic Spring, p. 58.
- 61 Panic Spring, p. 70.
- 62 Panic Spring, p. 67.
- 63 Panic Spring, p. 128; italics mine.
- 64 D. H. Lawrence, "The Overtone", in The Lovely
Lady (N.Y.) Signet (1959) [1946], p. 126; italics mine.
- 65 Panic Spring, p. 68.
- 66 Panic Spring, pp. 68 - 69.
- 67 Panic Spring, p. 69.

68 Richard Cavendish, The Black Arts (London) Pan Books (1969) [1967], esp. "The Origins of Satan", pp. 315 - 316.

69 The chief of these points concern Fonvisin. Fonvisin and his brother, both research scientists, had 'succeeded in isolating the germ of sleepy sickness'. Then Fonvisin found that his wife and his brother were having an affair. So, having destroyed every shred of their work, he inoculated his brother with the germ. His mother, he says,

was heartbroken over Grigori going to sleep like that, and me not being able to wake him. She is a little mad herself. She spends her life travelling on tours which she did in the height of her fame [as a singer]. All over the world, for she has still got a great fortune. Wherever she goes she takes Grigori with her, in a coffin lined with velvet and a mattress for him to sleep on. There is a glass top so she can open it and talk to him when she wants to. She introduces him to all her friends (p. 298; *italics mine*).

This rather macabre story, which Fonvisin protests is true, has two parallels in later novels.

The first occurs very early in Justine, when Capodistria (a 'great womanizer' like Fonvisin) relates the following story about his mad father.

When he was very old he had a model of the perfect woman built in rubber -- life-size. She could be filled with hot water in the winter. She was strikingly beautiful. He called her Sabina after his mother, and took her everywhere.

Sabina had a wonderful wardrobe. It was a sight to see them come into the dining-salon, dressed for dinner (1962 Faber one-volume edition, p. 34; *italics mine*).

The second parallel is in the latest novel, Nunquam (1970), and its concern with the building of Iolanthe II, a perfect life-like robot model of the dead Iolanthe. This is the passion of Julian, who dies in the arms of Iolanthe II

just as Capodistria's father died in the arms of his Sabina.

To complete the parallels: Fonvisin relates his story about the creation of a mummy in Panic Spring, giving quite a detailed account of the preparation (Chapter VIII, esp. pp. 138 - 145); Capodistria, who is thought to be dead, later writes a letter to Balthazar in which he describes the Paracelsian preparation of homunculi with which he has become involved (Clea, 1962 Faber one-volume edition, pp. 807 - 812); and the building of Iolanthe II in Nunquam involves a detailed section on the methods and procedures of embalming (pp. 153 - 164).

Durrell rightly points out at the end of Tunc (1968) that 'here and there in the text attentive readers may discern the odd echo from The Alexandria Quartet and even from The Black Book; this is intentional' (p. 317). The even more discerning reader will also find echoes from Pied Piper and Panic Spring.

70 Panic Spring, p. 286.

71 Panic Spring, p. 287.

72 Panic Spring, pp. 305 - 306.

73 Panic Spring, p. 316.

74 Panic Spring, p. 322.

75 Panic Spring, p. 326.

76 Panic Spring, p. 326.

77 Panic Spring, p. 327.

78 Panic Spring, p. 327.

79 Panic Spring, p. 327.

80 Panic Spring, p. 328.

81 "Note" to Balthazar (London) Faber (1961) [1958]; italics mine.

82 Lawrence Durrell, "Studies in Genius, VIII -- Henry Miller", p. 46.

- 83 Panic Spring, p. 269.
 - 84 De Gourmont, p. 64.
 - 85 Panic Spring, p. 93.
 - 86 Liljegren, Studies on the Origin and Early Tradition of English Utopian Fiction, p. 18.
 - 87 Lawrence Durrell, Prospero's Cell: A guide to the landscape and manners of the island of Corcyra (London) Faber (1962) [1945], p. 59. The sections of this book are dated, and the date has been given here specifically because of its relationship to the date of publication of Panic Spring, and to the date of the letter to Alan G. Thomas quoted at the end of this section.
 - 88 Kenneth Young, "A Dialogue With Durrell", in Encounter, XIII (December 1959), 67.
 - 89 In a note to the "Corfu and England" section of the Durrell anthology which he edited, Alan G. Thomas states that 'the provisional title went through a variety of forms, Phoenix and the Nightingale, Music in Limbo, but it was finally published . . . as Panic Spring.' Spirit of Place, pp. 27 - 28.
 - 90 Letter to Alan G. Thomas, in Spirit of Place, p. 38; italics mine.
- "Chapter Three"
- 1 Lawrence Durrell, The Black Book: An Agon (N.Y.) Cardinal (1962) [1938], p. 59.
 - 2 Lawrence Durrell, "Studies in Genius, VI -- Groddeck", in Horizon, XVII (June, 1948), 385.
 - 3 "Studies in Genius", 386.
 - 4 "Studies in Genius", 387.
 - 5 Georg Groddeck, M.D., The World of Man, trans. V.M.E. Collins, M.A. (N.Y.) Funk & Wagnalls (1951) [1934], pp. 52 - 53.
 - 6 The Black Book, p. 70.

- 7 The Black Book, p. 100.
- 8 The Black Book, p. 118.
- 9 The Black Book, p. 70.
- 10 The Black Book, p. 221.
- 11 Ernst Cassirer, Language and Myth, trans. Susanne
K. Langer (N.Y.) Dover Publications (1953) [1946], p. 3.
- 12 The Black Book, p. 94.
- 13 The Black Book, p. 154.
- 14 The Black Book, p. 102.
- 15 The Black Book, p. 106.
- 16 The Black Book, pp. 36, 83, 155, 208 and 218.
- 17 The Black Book, p. 70.
- 18 The Black Book, p. 202.
- 19 John Wilson, Language and The Pursuit of Truth
(G.B.) Cambridge University Press (1967), pp. 48 - 49.
- 20 The Black Book, p. 77.
- 21 The Black Book, p. 55.
- 22 The Black Book, p. 222.
- 23 The Black Book, p. 154.
- 24 The Black Book, p. 155.
- 25 Lawrence Durrell, "From A Writer's Journal",
in The Windmill, II (1947), 52.
- 26 The Black Book, p. 139.
- 27 The Black Book, p. 47.
- 28 The Black Book, p. 222.

- 29 The Black Book, p. 90.
- 30 The Black Book, p. 79.
- 31 The Black Book, p. 21.
- 32 The Black Book, p. 23.
- 33 Dunsany, The King of Elfland's Daughter.
- 34 The Black Book, pp. 37 - 38.
- 35 Lawrence Durrell, Key to Modern Poetry (London)
Peter Nevill (1952), p. 4.
- 36 The Black Book, p. 2.
- 37 The Black Book, p. 181.
- 38 The Black Book, p. 86.
- 39 The Black Book, p. 115; italics mine.
- 40 Groddeck, The World of Man, p. 208.
- 41 The Black Book, pp. 136 - 137.
- 42 The Black Book, p. 21.
- 43 Cassirer, p. 3.
- 44 The Black Book, p. 201.
- 45 The Black Book, p. 116.
- 46 Justine, p. 17.
- 47 The Black Book, p. 202.
- 48 The Black Book, p. 153n.
- 49 Aldous Huxley, Brave New World (G.B.) Penguin
(1955) [1932], p. 53.
- 50 The Black Book, p. 114.

- 51 Plato, Great Dialogues of, trans. W. H. D. Rouse, rev. ed. (N.Y.) The New American Library (1961), pp. 371 - 372.
- 52 P. Wyndham Lewis, Filibusters In Barbary (N.Y.) National Travel Club (1932), pp. 120 - 121.
- 53 The Black Book, pp. 140 - 141.
- 54 Letters, pp. 65 - 66.
- 55 The Black Book, p. 164.
- 56 The Black Book, p. 217.
- 57 Letters, p. 83.
- 58 See Letters, esp. pp. 60 - 61.
- 59 W. Y. Evans-Wentz, ed., "Introduction" to The Tibetan Book Of The Dead, or The After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane, according to Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering (G.B.) Oxford University Press (1960) [1927], p. 2.
- 60 Lawrence Durrell, Cefalû (London) Editions Poetry London (1947).
- 61 Plato, The Phaedo, in Great Dialogues of, p. 546.
- 62 The Phaedo, p. 547.
- 63 Evans-Wentz, p. v.
- 64 Evans-Wentz, p. 2.
- 65 Evans-Wentz, p. 28n.
- 66 These stages all appear in Book VII, 373.
- 67 Evans-Wentz, p. 29.
- 68 Plato, The Republic, VII, in Great Dialogues of, 378.
- 69 Evans-Wentz, p. 30.

- 70 Evans-Wentz, p. 29.
- 71 Evans-Wentz, p. 30; italics mine.
- 72 The Black Book, p. 38.
- 73 Lawrence Durrell, Bitter Lemons (London) Faber (1959) [1957], p. 15.
- 74 The Black Book, p. 220.
- 75 Letters, p. 104.
- 76 Letters, pp. 105 - 106.
- 77 Letters, p. 65.
- 78 See Miller's letter, p. 153.
- 79 Letters, p. 17.
- 80 The Black Book, p. 154.
- 81 The Black Book, p. 156.
- 82 The Black Book, p. 155.
- 83 Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Occidental Mythology (N.Y.) The Viking Press (1964), p. 312.
- 84 The Black Book, p. 213. The first appearance of this passage occurs on p. 192.
- 85 The Black Book, pp. 137 - 138.
- 86 The Black Book, pp. 80, 179, and 157. In relation to Old Fanny as Aphrodite, see T. C. Lethbridge, Witches (N.Y.) The Citadel Press (1968), p. 119; in relation to Miss Smith as the Danae, see Campbell, p. 336.
- 87 Groddeck, The World of Man, pp. 156 - 157.
- 88 The Black Book, p. 71.
- 89 The Black Book, p. 142.

90 Groddeck, The World of Man, p. 101. This reference is repeated throughout.

91 Walsh Clifton experiences a similar crisis in Pied Piper of Lovers, first when faced with the Catholic school in India, and then when he encounters his proselytizing grandmother. The chapter devoted to Francis in Panic Spring indicates a similar experience on her part, and the "Walsh" chapter of the same novel presents the Reverend Richard Pixie, who 'had never heard of Donne, piles, the Reformation, Duke Ellington, the cosmic ray, Remy de Gourmont, Henry Miller' (p. 110).

92 The Black Book, p. 124.

93 The Black Book, p. 100.

94 The Black Book, pp. 130 - 131.

95 The Black Book, p. 198.

96 The Black Book, p. 133.

97 Groddeck, The World of Man, pp. 160 - 162.

98 The Black Book, p. 107. Among other jobs, Durrell played jazz piano at the "Blue Peter" nightclub in London, and Walsh's occupation in Pied Piper and Panic Spring is writing popular songs. The crashing pun which Durrell makes when 'Lawrence Lucifer' speaks of his penis turning purple is incidental at this point (p. 106).

99 The Black Book, p. 107.

100 The Black Book, p. 185.

101 The Black Book, p. 202.

102 The Black Book, pp. 205 - 206.

103 The Black Book, p. 130.

104 Gerald B. Gardner, Witchcraft Today (London) Jarrolds (1968) [1954], p. 96.

- 105 Sir James G. Frazer, O.M., The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion, Part IV: Adonis, Attis, Osiris: Studies In The History Of Oriental Religion, Vol. 1 (London) Macmillan (1966) [1906], 8.
- 106 The Black Book, p. 101.
- 107 The Black Book, p. 211.
- 108 The Black Book, p. 114.
- 109 The Black Book, p. 179.
- 110 The Black Book, p. 149.
- 111 The Black Book, p. 218.
- 112 The Black Book, p. 218.
- 113 The Black Book, p. 3.
- 114 The Black Book, p. 192.
- 115 The Black Book, p. 140.
- 116 The Black Book, p. 89.
- 117 The Black Book, p. 154.
- 118 The Black Book, p. 101.
- 119 See The Black Book, p. 222: 'Art must no longer exist to depict man, but to invoke God.'
- 120 Letters, pp. 78 - 79.
- 121 Letter of 9 August 1970.
- 122 The Black Book, p. 3. See also: Kenneth Young, "Dialogue with Durrell", in Encounter, XIII (December, 1959), 67.
- 123 The Black Book, pp. 214 - 215.
- 124 Panic Spring, p. 117.

- 125 Letters, p. 61.
- 126 Groddeck, The World of Man, p. 207.
- 127 The Black Book, p. 37.
- 128 Pied Piper of Lovers, pp. 49 - 50.
- 129 Pied Piper of Lovers, p. 28.
- 130 The Black Book, pp. 127 - 128.
- 131 The Black Book, p. 202.
- 132 The Black Book, p. 153n.
- 133 The Black Book, pp. 208 - 209.
- 134 The Black Book, p. 93. For one possible source,
see Groddeck, The World of Man, p. 99.
- 135 The Black Book, p. 142.
- 136 The Black Book, pp. 137 - 138.
- 137 The Black Book, p. 177.
- 138 The Black Book, p. 80.
- 139 The Black Book, p. 216.
- 140 The Black Book, p. 212.
- 141 The Black Book, p. 214.
- 142 Gardner, p. 81. For further comments on this
parallel, see pp. 81 - 92.
- 143 Vittorio Macchioro, "The Villa of the Mysteries"
(Naples) Richter & Co. (n.d.), quoted in Gardner, esp.
pp. 97 - 98.
- 144 Evans-Wentz, p. 45n.
- 145 Text, pp. 142 - 143.

- 146 Spirit of Place, p. 28.
- 147 The Black Book, p. 124.
- 148 The Black Book, p. 206; italics mine.
- 149 Letters, p. 79.
- 150 A. A. Brill, "Introduction" to The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud (N.Y.) The Modern Library (1938), p. 12.
- 151 Text, p. 169.
- 152 The Black Book, p. 13.
- 153 The Black Book, p. 173.
- 154 The Black Book, p. 222.
- 155 Letters, pp. 26 - 27.
- 156 Letters, p. 43.
- 157 "Hamlet, Prince of China" appeared in the Christmas, 1938 issue of Delta, pp. 38 - 45. Of a total of 247 lines of type, 80 lines do not appear in the January, 1937 letter which was later included in Wickes' edition of the correspondence, pp. 49 - 54. In other words, one-third of the Delta letter consisted of what Wickes calls 'minor changes'!
- 158 Lawrence Durrell, "Hamlet, Prince of China", in Delta (Christmas), 1938), p. 42.
- 159 The Black Book, p. 201.
- 160 Letters, pp. 26 - 27.
- 161 The Black Book, p. 201.
- 162 The Black Book, p. 161.
- 163 The Black Book, p. 196.
- 164 The allusion to Eugene Marais is interesting here, as Durrell's use of The Soul of the White Ant as a source is not made clear until The Alexandria Quartet.

- 165 The Black Book, pp. 201, 161 and 163.
- 166 The Black Book, p. 164.
- 167 Groddeck, The World of Man, pp. 115 - 116.
- 168 Groddeck, p. 185.
- 169 The Black Book, p. 218.
- 170 The Black Book, pp. 31 and 34.
- 171 The Black Book, pp. 68 - 69.
- 172 The Black Book, p. 32; see The Waste Land,
III, 11. 215 - 256.
- 173 The Black Book, p. 126.
- 174 The Black Book, p. 138.
- 175 Groddeck, The World of Man, p. 218; see also,
pp. 234 - 235.
- 176 Groddeck, p. 194.
- 177 Georg Groddeck, M.D., The Unknown Self: A New
Psychological Approach to the Problems of Life, with
Special Reference to Disease. Trans. M. Collins (London)
C. W. Daniel Company (1937) [1929], p. 65.
- 178 The Black Book, p. 142; see also, p. 78: 'Between
the artist I, and Hilda the prostitute, there is an
immediate correspondence.'
- 179 Groddeck, The Unknown Self, pp. 160 and 163.
- 180 "Hamlet, Prince of China", p. 39.

"Chapter Four"

- 1 Letters, p. 201; italics mine.
- 2 See "Contents" in The Dark Labyrinth (London)
Faber (1964). All subsequent references are to this edition.

- 3 Fraser, pp. 98 - 99.
- 4 The Dark Labyrinth, pp. 41 and 45.
- 5 Letters, p. 209.
- 6 L. D. Ettlinger, "The Role of the Artist in Society", in Alfred Cobban, ed., The Eighteenth Century: Europe in The Age of Enlightenment (N.Y.) McGraw-Hill (1969), p. 254.
- 7 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 59.
- 8 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 193.
- 9 The Dark Labyrinth, pp. 95 and 197.
- 10 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 229.
- 11 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 189.
- 12 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 215.
- 13 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 194.
- 14 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 239.
- 15 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 255.
- 16 Lawrence Durrell, White Eagles Over Serbia (London) Faber (1957), p. 106.
- 17 The Dark Labyrinth, pp. 84 - 85.
- 18 "Cities, Plains and People", ll. 111 - 118.
- 19 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 90.
- 20 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 118.
- 21 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 116.
- 22 Georg Groddeck, The Book of The It, intro. Lawrence Durrell (N.Y.) Vintage (1961) [1923], p. 25.
- 23 The Dark Labyrinth, pp. 192 - 193.

mine. 24 The Dark Labyrinth, pp. 192 - 193.
 25 Groddeck, The Unknown Self, p. 163; italics

26 The Dark Labyrinth, pp. 104 - 106.

27 The Dark Labyrinth, pp. 113 - 114.

28 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 153.

29 Letters, pp. 46 - 47.

30 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 245.

31 The Dark Labyrinth, pp. 191 and 192.

32 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 253.

33 Groddeck, The World of Man, p. 207.

34 The Dark Labyrinth, pp. 255 - 256.

35 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 241.

36 This story exists only in a manuscript longhand, and some of Durrell's handwriting is difficult to decipher. On the other hand, considering that the title page includes the name and address of Faber and Faber, we must assume that he intended it as a fair copy.

Similarly, dating is difficult. We might state that, in the light of the striking parallel between the concept with which the story deals and the concepts put forward in Cefalû, Durrell probably wrote the two fairly close together. But the point is moot, considering that similar ideas occur in The Alexandria Quartet.

37 "The Will-Power Man", in UCLA Durrell Collection, #637, Box 4, "Ephemera", p. 7 recto.

38 "The Will-Power Man", p. 9 recto.

39 "The Will-Power Man", pp. 18 verso - 19 recto.

40 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 249.

- 41 Groddeck, The Unknown Self, p. 35.
- 42 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 244.
- 43 The Dark Labyrinth, pp. 244 - 245.
- 44 The Dark Labyrinth, pp. 72 and 78 - 79.
- 45 Fraser, p. 99.

"Chapter Five"

1 Durrell had written at least two other plays -- a play dealing with the Elizabethan statesman, Walsingham, derivative in great part of Leslie Hotson's book on the death of Christopher Marlowe and in all likelihood contemporary with the writing of Panic Spring, and Black Honey: an historical farce.

According to Alan G. Thomas,

Black Honey, a farce in three acts dealing with imaginary incidents in the lives of Baudelaire and Meryon, was written for a group of amateur players in Alexandria at the end of 1942 or the beginning of 1943. It has never been printed or produced, but there is a typescript in the library of Iowa State University (Fraser, pp. 198 - 199).

As when Fraser's study appeared I was interested in working solely with Durrell's plays, I immediately wrote Special Collections at Iowa State to beg a photocopy of the typescript. Thomas had been in error regarding the university to which he had sold the typescript, for the reply came from the University of Iowa. They very kindly consented to do the photocopying at my cost, but with one major provision. I could not quote from the play, although I could describe it.

I have elected to include the following comments on the play in the thesis for two reasons. First, the item is extremely rare. Second, and more important, one or two aspects of the play suggest later developments in Durrell's work. Jeanne Duval, for example, is a rough

sketch of the later Justine, and we might perhaps learn something about Justine from her. Again, the relationship of Baudelaire to society is very much related to the Darley of the Quartet. And, finally, Martinique is to Baudelaire as Crete is to Campion in Cefalû, and as his 'headland in the Cyclades' is to Darley in the Quartet: a metaphor for the removal of the artist from society, and also for the state of nature to which the individual must logically return. The decision to burden the reader with such a long footnote was based on the relationship of the play to the thesis. To my mind, the material contained in an appendix should be at least tangentially relevant to the major concepts of the thesis in order to justify calling the reader's attention to it. Black Honey is not, and it must therefore be relegated to the footnotes.

It would be presumptuous to attempt to analyse a play from which I cannot quote. But two things should be given all the same: a general opinion of the play, and as much of a description of the MS as is possible from a photocopy. Thematically, this play is by no means an early Sappho (1950) or Irish Faustus (1963), but it is great fun to read and aptly described as 'farce'. Baudelaire is neither decadent nor particularly literary, and Meryon is more a sympathetic bumbler than an escaped lunatic. Jeanne Duval is the best-achieved figure, but Marie, the maid, is the most natural and believable character of all. Black Honey does surpass the published plays in one major respect: action. His published works suggest that Durrell is primarily a writer of closet-drama, but this play shows that he can contrive and handle stage action, at least in light comedy. Comparing it with his prose fiction, Black Honey is in the vein of the Antrobus stories of Stiff Upper Lip, Esprit de Corps and Sauve Qui Peut. I suspect that the amateur group for which the play was written was composed primarily of minor consular officials with whom Durrell served in Alexandria during World War II.

The MS itself comprises fifty-two 8 1/2" x 14" pages. These are composed of: a title page which states title, author, name and address of his agent; Act One (14 pp.); a prefacing page to Act Two; Act Two (18 pp.)

and Act Three (18 pp.) Pagination is by act, rather than consecutive. Spacing is not a consideration: speeches in Act One occur on subsequent lines, with indentation and two spaces setting off stage directions, which are sometimes lengthy; in Acts Two and Three, speeches are separated by two spaces and stage directions are offset as in Act One. Stage directions are underlined in all acts, although sometimes not completely. The only correction in the MS occurs twice on page 6 of Act One, where Baudelaire refers to his 'Uncle John'. The photocopy clearly shows a faint outline of a "paste-in" of the word 'John' in both cases. I suspected at the time of receiving the photocopy that the original name had been 'Claud', but that events in Act Three had made the earlier view of 'Uncle Claud' untenable, and that the first references were consequently altered. Special Collections at The University of Iowa very kindly examined the MS for me, and they report that my surmise was correct. Finally, we should note that spelling and other typographical considerations suggest that this is probably as fair a copy as Durrell ever intended to produce, which in itself can be taken to indicate the degree of esteem in which he held the play.

2 Lawrence Durrell, Balthazar (London) Faber (1961) [1958], p. 7. This "Note" does not appear with Balthazar in the standard, revised edition of 1962, although a form of it does preface that one-volume edition. References other than those to this "Note" will all be to the revised edition.

3 Lawrence Durrell, Clea (London) Faber (1961) [1960], p. 5. Again, as in Balthazar, this "Note" does not appear in the 1962 edition. Instead, it was incorporated with the note from the second volume. All other references will be to the 1962 edition.

4 For example, Balthazar, p. 238: 'How had all this come about? To understand it is necessary to work backwards, through the great Interlinear which Balthazar had constructed around my manuscript, towards that point in time where the portrait which Clea was painting was interrupted by a kiss.'

5 Lawrence Durrell, Justine (London) Faber (1962), p. 28.

⁶ See, for example: Justine, p. 100; Clea, pp. 692 and 757.

⁷ Balthazar, p. 210.

⁸ Balthazar, p. 338.

⁹ See Clea's comment to Darley in Balthazar, p. 382.

¹⁰ Balthazar, p. 338. For a concept analogous to that suggested by Pursewarden, see P. Wyndham Lewis's use of "false bottoms" in his The Revenge For Love (1937).

¹¹ Balthazar, pp. 338 and 339.

¹² Balthazar, p. 289.

¹³ Curtis Cate, "Lawrence Durrell", in Atlantic Monthly, CCVIII: 6 (December, 1961), 65.

¹⁴ Clea, pp. 757 - 758.

¹⁵ Justine, p. 28.

¹⁶ Balthazar, pp. 306 - 307.

¹⁷ Balthazar, p. 7.

¹⁸ Lawrence Durrell, Key to Modern Poetry (London) Peter Nevill (1952), p. 28. Pursewarden's theories are drawn almost exclusively from this critical volume, especially "Chapter 2: Space Time and Poetry".

¹⁹ Leo A. Aroian, et al., eds., Van Nostrand's Scientific Encyclopedia (Princeton, N.Y.) D. Van Nostrand and Company, Inc. (1968), p. 303.

²⁰ Stanley L. Jaki, The Relevance of Physics (Chicago) University of Chicago Press (1966), p. 273.

²¹ Key to Modern Poetry, pp. 29 - 30.

²² Balthazar, p. 370.

²³ Clea, p. 708.

- 24 Key to Modern Poetry, p. 32.
- 25 Edwin F. Taylor and John Archibald Wheeler,
Spacetime Physics (San Francisco) W. H. Freeman and
Company (1966), p. 40.
- 26 Key to Modern Poetry, p. 28.
- 27 Balthazar, p. 338.
- 28 Justine, p. 97.
- 29 Clea, p. 658; italics mine.
- 30 The circumstances surrounding the death and
sanctification of Scobie as 'El Scob' contain an implicit
spacetime pun -- he was quite literally "in the right
place at the right time".
- 31 Clea, pp. 758 - 759.
- 32 Lord Dunsany, The King of Elfland's Daughter,
p. 40.
- 33 Pied Piper of Lovers, p. 369.
- 34 Gerald Sykes, "Introduction" to Lawrence Durrell,
The Black Book: An Agon (N.Y.) Cardinal (1962), p. ix.
- 35 The Black Book, p. 218.
- 36 Clea, pp. 705 - 706.
- 37 The Black Book, p. 142.
- 38 The Black Book, p. 142.
- 39 Clea, p. 760.
- 40 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 240.
- 41 Balthazar, p. 280.
- 42 Durrell, Key to Modern Poetry, p. 29.

- 43 Justine, p. 152.
- 44 Justine, p. 171.
- 45 Clea, pp. 807 - 812.
- 46 Balthazar, p. 292.
- 47 Justine, p. 164.
- 48 Justine, p. 68.
- 49 Justine, pp. 152 - 153.
- 50 Justine, p. 151.
- 51 Balthazar, p. 326.
- 52 Balthazar, p. 287.
- 53 Justine, p. 73.
- 54 Groddeck, The World of Man, pp. 156 - 157.
- 55 Balthazar, p. 285.
- 56 Balthazar, p. 243.
- 57 Justine, p. 68.
- 58 Justine, p. 61.
- 59 Justine, p. 81.
- 60 Justine, p. 63.
- 61 Clea, p. 694.
- 62 Cf. T. C. Lethbridge, Witches (N.Y.) Citadel Press (1968) [1962].
- 63 Mountolive, p. 555.
- 64 Justine, p. 92. There are several similar references in the novel.

- 65 Justine, p. 63.
- 66 Balthazar, p. 376.
- 67 Durrell, Prospero's Cell, p. 115.
- 68 Clea, pp. 754 - 755.
- 69 Balthazar, p. 380.
- 70 Balthazar, p. 381.
- 71 Clea, p. 871.
- 72 Balthazar, pp. 288 - 289.
- 73 Balthazar, p. 380.
- 74 Justine, p. 194.
- 75 Clea, p. 760.
- 76 Clea, p. 792.
- 77 "Cities, Plains and People", 1. 53
- 78 Julian Mitchell and Gene Andrews, "The Art of Fiction, XXIII: Lawrence Durrell", in The Paris Review, No. 22 (Autumn-Winter, 1959 - 1960), 38.
- 79 Clea, p. 772.
- 80 Balthazar, p. 217.
- 81 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 153.
- 82 Mountolive, pp. 578 - 579.
- 83 Clea, p. 763.
- 84 Clea, p. 763.
- 85 For example, p. 94.
- 86 Clea, pp. 797 - 798.

- 87 Balthazar, p. 370.
- 88 Letters, p. 98.
- 89 Letters, pp. 60 - 61.
- 90 Reflections On A Marine Venus, p. 15.
- 91 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 114.
- 92 Justine, p. 137.
- 93 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 114.
- 94 Clea, p. 667.
- 95 Letters, pp. 46 - 47.
- 96 Balthazar, p. 306.
- 97 Clea, p. 772.
- 98 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 187.
- 99 The Dark Labyrinth, p. 253.
- 100 Clea, p. 773.
- 101 Clea, pp. 772 - 773.
- 102 The Unknown Self, p. 163.
- 103 Clea, p. 874.
- 104 Clea, p. 877.
- 105 Clea, p. 661.
- 106 Clea, p. 877.
- 107 Clea, p. 791.
- 108 Pied Piper of Lovers, p. 368.
- 109 De Gourmont, The Natural Philosophy of Love, p.

110 "Introduction" to The Natural Philosophy of Love, p. xi.

111 Eugène Marais, The Soul of the White Ant, trans. Winifred De Kok (London) Methuen (1939) [1937]. See Balthazar, p. 298.

112 Key to Modern Poetry, p. 28.

113 Key to Modern Poetry, p. 30.

"Chapter Six"

1 Lawrence Durrell, Nunquam (London) Faber (1970), p. 285.

2 Clea, p. 877.

3 Lawrence Durrell, Tunc (London) Faber (1968), p. 20.

4 Tunc, p. 17.

5 Tunc, p. 24.

6 Nunquam, p. 66.

7 Nunquam, p. 285.

8 Tunc, p. 310.

9 Tunc, p. 276.

10 Tunc, p. 279.

11 Nunquam, p. 198.

12 Tunc, p. 13.

13 Tunc, p. 43.

14 Tunc, p. 63.

15 Tunc, p. 76.

- 16 Tunc, p. 285.
- 17 Nunquam, p. 86.
- 18 Nunquam, p. 96.
- 19 Nunquam, p. 177.
- 20 Tunc, p. 232.
- 21 Tunc, p. 269.
- 22 Tunc, pp. 233 - 234.
- 23 Nunquam, p. 239.
- 24 Nunquam, p. 18.
- 25 Pied Piper of Lovers, pp. 294 - 295.
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